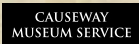


# 'HERITAGE PRACTICE IN CONTESTED SPACES' SEMINAR



Organised by:



Funded by:



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund  
Investing in your future

A project supported by the PEACE III Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by the North East PEACE III Partnership.

# 'Respect, participation, transformation, expertise, benefit to society'

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Northern Ireland Community Relations Council | Limavady Borough Council | Coleraine Borough  
Council | Moyle District Council

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# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	6
BACKGROUND	9
DAY 1 - SEPTEMBER 23	12
DAY 2 - SEPTEMBER 24	16
DAY 3 - SEPTEMBER 25	20
DAY 4 - SEPTEMBER 26	24
LESSONS LEARNT	26
LIMAVADY DECLARATION	28
NEXT STEPS	30





# INTRODUCTION

There has been international interest for some time in the models of practice developed in the Causeway region, aimed at using museums and heritage as key resources for developing communities and building a shared future.

In 2012, a partnership between Causeway Museum Service\* and MINOM° developed, aimed at facilitating an event that would share this practice, contextualise and benchmark it against international models and produce a shared learning process. Key to the concept was a commitment to engage with robust and innovative evaluation methods which would both capture the outcomes of the event and enable participants to engage in a reflective learning process that would engender long term capacity growth.

Heritage Practice in Contested Spaces was based in the Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre over four days in September 2013 and looked at diverse practice, places and case studies across the region, often in the

context of EU-funded PEACEIII work which had taken place, addressing both the legacy of past conflict and the societal problems which continue to pose a threat.

Funding to support the programme was secured from Northern Ireland Community Relations Council and North East PEACE III Partnership. The generosity of the funders meant that no charge was made for any of the programme.

The Programme attracted participants from a wide range of areas, from community to government, who involved themselves in many different ways. A particularly valuable element was the engagement of experienced practitioners from outside Northern Ireland – from the USA, the

Netherlands, Portugal, France and the Republic of Ireland - whose knowledge and critical, but friendly, assessment both validated and contextualised the work presented.

What was apparent from the beginning and throughout and crucial to the success of the event, was that there was a huge amount of wisdom, passion, energy and respect in the room, from the people who stayed all four days, and from those who were only able to attend a single session. Every day was long, packed and challenging. There was genuine excitement and enthusiasm and many people came to express the opinion that they were involved in something of genuine importance which had real relevance beyond the immediate region.

From quite early in the process, the organisers realised that they faced

a major challenge in finding ways of meeting the demands that the process continue. An informal community of practice has already emerged across the different sectors and there is an expectation that the process will develop more formally and will position the ethos and learning in broader and international contexts.

Those involved in the organisation are genuinely grateful to everyone who came along or hosted the group, for their openness and the generosity of contributions, which were both inspiring and humbling. We also hope that the deliberate emphasis on practice and the relevance of working outside the academy in developing valid and useful theory was justified by the feeling of shared and collegiate success articulated by participants, whatever their background.

Causeway Museum Service and MINOM October 2013

\* Causeway Museum Service is an innovative partnership established in 1996 by four local authorities - Coleraine, Limavady, Ballymoney and Moyle, to develop and deliver museum services across the region.

° MINOM - an affiliate of UNESCO International Council of Museums, established in 1988 to promote socially responsive 'new museology' with a particular emphasis on the democratisation of community participation.

# INTRODUCTION



# BACKGROUND

## ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED

BBC Film Archive	MINOM
Ballintoy Archaeology and Historical Society	Monaghan County Council
Ballymoney Borough Council	Moyle District Council
Ballysally Focus on Family	National Museums NI
Belfast City Council - Culture, Arts and Tourism Unit	National Trust
Belfast City Council - Ulster Hall	North East PEACE III Partnership Board
Cavan County Museum	Northern Ireland Community Relations Council
Causeway Museum Service	Northern Ireland Screen
Coleraine Borough Council - Coleraine Museum	Northern Ireland Museums Professional Network
Coleraine Ulster Scots Resource Centre	Quarto Heritage Consultants
Consultant archaeologist	Queens University;
Consultant heritage interpretation and research	School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology
Dept of Culture, Arts & Leisure	Queens University;
Fermanagh District Council	School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering
Foyle Civic Trust	Reinwardt Academy Amsterdam
Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland - Reach Project	Titanic Belfast
Holywell Trust	University of Coimbra
IRFU Ulster Branch	University of Minnesota
Limavady Borough Council	University of Ulster;
Limavady Borough Council - Limavady Museum	Centre for Maritime Studies
Milford House Museum	University of Ulste;
Mid Antrim Museums Service	School of English and History
	University of Ulster;
	School of Environmental Sciences

**H**eritage Practice in Contested Spaces did not emerge in a vacuum, or accidentally in the region in which it took place. All the key organisations and people involved have been working towards the identified aims and will continue to do so out of a genuine commitment which goes beyond the institutional.

Ireland, the north of Ireland and the Causeway region are all distinctive and possessing of strong, complex and overlapping identities which while being 'local' also relate to and connect with Great Britain, Europe, the Atlantic region and experiences shared around the world. The Causeway region perches on the western fringe of Europe and can sometimes be seen as parochial and self-referential, closer acquaintance reveals a long history of connection and engagement with wider worlds. While frequently perceived, and even self-describing as, an area of relative peace and prosperity, not far beneath the surface lies a history violence and pain which matches elsewhere in Northern Ireland. Pockets of severe economic and social deprivation also blot the lives of many living in the area. On-going sectarianism exists alongside international tourism destinations, education centres and a tradition of good neighbourliness.

The Causeway Museum Service was founded in 1996 by four local authorities with museum collections, to develop and deliver museum services. Causeway Museum Service has used the lack of full-time conventional museum buildings in which to house and display collections to an advantage. Administratively based in the largest local government authority of the area, museum operations are increasingly mainstreamed with the overall objectives aligned to the wider corporate objectives to serve and improve the lives of the people. Rather than permanent displays being the main consumer of resource, the emphasis is on programming access to the collections, outreach and community engagement, with an energy and intensity that has astonished outsiders more used to conventional local museum practice. Museum work in and with communities,



# BACKGROUND

rather than being discretionary or a support mechanism for collecting or exhibitions, becomes the major rationale and driver for the organisation's strategic direction, complicated and strengthened by the need to work across three, and sometimes four, local authorities, each of which in turn represents a degree of diversity.

In apparent contrast, MINOM has largely existed in the international, Portuguese-speaking contexts, where it firstly articulated the Latin concepts of new-museology before repositioning these as 'socio-museology', a word which hardly exists in the Anglophone world. Like all organisations, however, MINOM undergoes iterative processes of change, seeking and evaluating other modes of working, acknowledging the value of each and attempting to create an additive rather than oppositional process.

The final, crucial element which both these partners were determined to make central to the process, was an examination of the local in terms of the international and vice versa. As well as practice in Northern Ireland having much to offer, there is a tendency to see issues in terms of

exception, rather than connecting to wider experience of historical trends such as colonialism or the growth of culturally deterministic nation states.

Personal connections, discussions and mutual respect have built advantageous professional links across a range of stakeholders included on the programme, without which Heritage Practice in Contested Spaces could not have happened in the form it did.

Key right from the planning stage was the engagement of Prof. Ross VeLure Roholt from the University of Minnesota. The University has been involved in Northern Ireland since shortly after the Good Friday Agreement principally relating to youth work, but this has also involved heritage practice and a series of engagements with the Irish Museums Association. Prof. Roholt lived in Northern Ireland, worked with several of the organisers of this event, including leading on a major evaluation of the ground-breaking 'Conflict: the Irish at War' exhibition at the Ulster Museum which was perhaps the most substantive museum response to the post-conflict situation. Co-author with

Prof. Mike Baizerman of a recent volume on evaluation of practice in contested spaces, Roholt's specific expertise, as well as his outstanding skill in unobtrusive and democratic facilitation, was one of the corner stones round which planning was

constructed. In practice, this meant a determination that evaluation (ie learning and the identification of change) was integral to the whole process rather than being simply a summation to be added in at the end.

## PROJECTS THE KEY PERSONNEL HAVE WORKED ON PREVIOUSLY

- 1 Irish Museums Association Training Workshop on community engagement 2005
- 2 Public Achievement 'From Spectator to Co-Curator' 2006
- 3 Causeway Museum Service 1613- 2013 programme 2007 - onwards
- 4 Causeway Museum Service 'Engaging Your Communities' Seminar 2009
- 5 www.niarchive.org development and operations 2009 - onwards
- 6 Causeway Museum Service and Mid Antrim Museums Service North East PEACEIII Cultural Connections 2009 - 2011 and Cultural Fusions 2009 - 2013

## KEY PERSONNEL

- Prof. Ross. R. VeLure Roholt Project 2
- P. dos Santos Projects 1, 2
- R. Heslip Projects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- H. Perry Projects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
- G. Reid Projects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
- Dr C. Breen Projects 3, 6
- Prof A Horning Projects 3, 6
- Nick Brannon Projects 3, 6

# 'you must be able to dance if you are to heal people'

## INTRODUCTION TO HERITAGE PRACTICE IN CONTESTED SPACES

Helen Perry Causeway Museum Service

## INTRODUCTION TO THE IDEAS MARKET

Robert Heslip MINOM Board

## LEARNING TO LEARN: Evaluation Methodologies

Prof. Ross. R. VeLure Roholt University of Minnesota

## EXPERT VERSUS COMMUNITY: 'WHOSE VOICE IS IT?'

Dr Max Hope University of Ulster  
Gemma Reid University of Ulster

## REFLECTIONS ON HERITAGE PRACTICES

Paula dos Santos MINOM, Reinwardt Academy

Full transcripts of the sessions are available [www.nirachive.org/HPICS](http://www.nirachive.org/HPICS)

## WHAT WE ACHIEVED

### Participants were briefed on:

- What and why CMS were organising this seminar
- MINOM and its aims
- Ideas market – a way of show-casing wider experience in the room

### Participants explored and considered:

- What is evaluation?
- How to work in contested spaces
- Where evaluation is missing or taken for granted
- Key elements – safety, neutrality and credibility
- The evaluator needs to be engaged, participant and aware

### Participants discussed:

Participants working together came up with a series of key points to inform practice, some of which came out of the social, political and administrative context in which they worked, others from the demands of funders which tended to be considered burdens and impositions.

**DAY 1**  
**23RD SEPTEMBER**



# 'Who's voice don't we have'

**DAY 1**  
23RD SEPTEMBER

### Evaluation with Ross:

- Funders' requirements for evaluation which tend to be quantitative rather than qualitative
- Evaluation should be about taking projects forward not an end in itself - picking up on Ross's points on the purposes of evaluation
- How is evaluation done when stories are contested?
- Ideas behind communities of practice

### 'Who is the expert?' with Max and Gemma:

Presenting the research project and work carried out by the University of Ulster's team on the Scottish island of Colonsay, Max and Gemma identified a number of issues which included:

- Who is the expert, who makes the decisions?
- How can you do this work in contested spaces?
- The community of practice model developing out of project experience

Following on from these sessions everyone developed and agreed terms of reference which were framed as 'touchstones'\*

- RESPECT • PARTICIPATION • EXPERTISE • DOES THE WORK DO GOOD

\* A touchstone is a piece of rock where samples of precious metal were scratched. The colour of the scratch revealed whether the sample was good gold or fake.

Coming towards the end of busy, challenging and reflective day, Paula brought fresh energy into the room with very personal and engaged descriptions of international examples of communities of practice and the need for both passion and respect.

### EVENTS

- Official launch by Mayor of Limavady Cllr G. Mullan
- 1613 and all that tour of Coleraine by Sally Cupples Ballysally Focus on Family
- Official launch of Coleraine 400 exhibition by Mayor of Coleraine Cllr D. Harding





**COLONIALISM AND CONFLICT**

Prof. Pedro Leite University of Coimbra  
Dr Colin Breen University of Ulster, Centre for Maritime Studies

**PROJECT OF PLANTATION TOUR**

Nick Brannon Archaeologist + Chair of the Society for  
Post-Medieval Archaeology  
John Hamilton Causeway Museum Service

**COLONIALISM & CONFLICT REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICE  
AT BALLINTOY**

Prof. Audrey Horning Queen’s University  
Gemma Reid University of Ulster  
Robert Corbett Ballintoy Archaeology and Historical Society  
John Hamilton Causeway Museum Service

Full transcripts of the sessions are available [www.nirachive.org/HPICS](http://www.nirachive.org/HPICS)

**WHAT WE ACHIEVED**

**Participants were briefed on:**

Crucial to developing appropriate heritage practice dealing with contested histories of the Plantation is to consider experience in other places. Pedro Leite from MINOM set the day up by sharing with participants his experience and heritage practice building peace in Mozambique.

**Participants explored and considered with Pedro:**

- European colonisation, particularly by the Portuguese
- the history of Mozambique post independence and key issues such as:
  - the legacy of traumatised child soldiers
  - the role of memory with an approach that looks for better ways to use narratives and ideologies to highlight commonality and continuity. Can we use the past to build the present or do we use the present to build the past?

**Participants explored and considered with Colin:**

Participants were encouraged to link what they had learnt from Pedro back to Northern Ireland and to consider the cyclical nature of conflict. He also discussed markers or evidence which indicated the potential escalation of conflict. Colin presented the historical context of Ulster Plantation in terms of acquisition of land, resources - including people and making money, then drew parallels with Mozambique and its experience. The two predominant cultures in Northern Ireland are in the process of reimagining the past and imbedding political narratives into their presentation of the past to make theirs the dominant story. Archaeological process and facts can challenge this politicised reconstruction of history.



# 'Archaeological process and facts can challenge politicised reconstruction of history'

**DAY 2**  
24TH SEPTEMBER

## **PARTICIPANTS POSED KEY QUESTIONS:**

How do we learn to manage conflict better and find ways in and out of each others narratives?

- Archaeological facts can challenge these narratives
- We need to use archaeological evidence to show diversity, acceptance and to begin breaking down barriers

## **How do strategies of memory work and function in Africa with approaches that include traditional healing and Human Rights Court?**

- Mozambique wanted to be peaceful and rebuild, but victims cannot be forgotten, victims have to be addressed but society must go on. Too much attachment to the past means we have no space to think about the future.
- Trying to build the collective memory in Mozambique is challenging; it is a multiracial country with many different ethnicities. National identity is complex.

Causeway Museum Service with Nick Brannon then took everyone on the Project of Plantation tour developed for PEACEIII Cultural Fusions Project being delivered by Causeway Museum Service in partnership with Mid Antrim Museums Service.

In Ballintoy, following a presentation by Robert Corbett and the Ballintoy History and Archaeology Group on their Project of Plantation work with University of Ulster, Queens University and Causeway Museum Service, a lively discussion reflected on the role of the experts and how to work together to share contested histories. From the community the message was very clear – these 'experts' respect our local knowledge, these have been 'experts' that do and participate with us, get around the table recognising that everyone brings expertise. There is no pedestal.

## **EVENTS**

- Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre tour of the centre with National Trust
- Welcome by Chair Moyle District Council Cllr Cara McShane



DAY 3

25TH SEPTEMBER

## REFLECTIONS ON HERITAGE PRACTICE IN CONTESTED SPACES

Prof Ross R. VeLure Roholt

### URBAN CONTESTED SPACE: COLERAINE AND MARKET YARD

Helen Perry Causeway Museum Service

### RURAL CONTESTED SPACE: MAGILLIGAN POINT AND ST AIDAN'S CHURCH

Bryonie and Gemma Reid Quarto Heritage Consultants

### ON THE BRINK 1912 – 1913

Maria Cagney Mid Antrim Museums Service  
John Hamilton Causeway Museum Service

Full transcripts of the sessions are available [www.nirachive.org/HPICS](http://www.nirachive.org/HPICS)

## WHAT WE ACHIEVED

### Participants were briefed on with Ross:

- The challenges of single identity work
- Narratives that include violence and criminality
- Can the facilitator be neutral or is it better to be honest about who you are?
- What is the relevance of facilitators to a group?
- The process of interrogating what 'honesty' means is a process of reflection and self criticism for the facilitator

### Participants were briefed on with Helen:

- Participants contributed their first impressions of Coleraine
- Considered that social deprivation figures and sectarian incidences tell a different story
- The town lacks a community meeting space
- And on site, the future for the Market Yard at one of the sectarian interfaces in the town

### Participants propped in response:

*Use the heritage, markets (farmers, crafts), alternative lifestyle festivals, exhibitions, heritage festivals, events, performances and concerts.*



# DAY 3

## 25TH SEPTEMBER

### Participants were briefed on with Bryonie and Gemma:

The 'mapping place' methodology they were going to undertake at Magilligan Point and St Aidan's Church. Split into two groups, one group, led by historical guide Richard Gillen, began the process through recording and gathering objects at Magilligan Point where the military base intersects with the sea, the dunes and public pathways beside the ferry across to the Republic of Ireland - 'borders'. The second group, led by historical guide Declan O'Deobhlin, began the process through recording and gathering objects at St Aidan's Church, an ancient site with a church and graveyard still in use. This group looked at the difference between what is visible now and what is the dominant history - 'snakes and crosses'.

- Contesting claims on place in Northern Ireland
- Re-visioning contested, conflicted spaces
- Importance of the knowledgeable guide

Back in their groups, participants produced the resulting montages or maps of the experiences of the groups which allowed everyone's perspectives to be visualised and where a number of narratives could be built up.

### Participants explored with Maria and John:

The evening session focussed on the methodology used by Causeway Museum Service and Mid Antrim Museum Service to explore and contextualise the Home Rule Crisis in 1912, as part of their PEACEIII Cultural Fusions Project 'On the Brink'. The importance of local histories to challenge and explore these major commemorative dates, using in this instance newspaper archives, connecting local secondary school students through their own people and places to the national anniversaries that shape our communities.



**DAY 4**

**28TH SEPTEMBER**

**'STITCHING AND UNSTITCHING THE TROUBLES'**

Helen Perry Causeway Museum Service  
John Hamilton Causeway Museum Service

**TOWARDS THE MINOM LIMAVADY DECLARATION**

Robert Heslip and Paula dos Santos MINOM

Full transcripts of the sessions are available [www.nirarchive.org/HPICS](http://www.nirarchive.org/HPICS)

**WHAT WE ACHIEVED**

Causeway Museum Service outlined the methodology used to record and share local people's experiences of recent conflict. This has been based on a methodology used throughout the world to record memories of conflict, often by women living in or on the margins of conflict. 'Stitching and Unstitching the Troubles' project as part of North East PEACEIII Cultural Fusions project has produced a range of responses through doll making and more complex collages depending on the time scale available. However, it is the kind of project that will continue to grow as other sessions are delivered. It is an accessible, engaging and affordable methodology. Those recording their experiences aren't required to be expert needleworkers, the materials can be scraps, it's the telling of the personal histories that matters.

Participants learnt that this methodology enabled those who found it difficult to talk about their experiences a way to begin the process. But they also heard that some are not yet ready.

Whilst they worked on their own dolls to share their own histories, participants reflected on their experiences and what they had learnt over the last three days. The resulting quilt contains the story telling dolls and 3D objects created during this session alongside key responses to the seminar.

The short concluding session with Robert and Paula discussed the draft MINOM Limavady Declaration now finalised and as follows on Page 28.

**EVENTS**

- Ideas Market. All the projects were popular but the ultimate winner was the Virtual Reimaging of the Market Yard in Coleraine with Sunlea and Base Youth Groups
- North East PEACEIII Cultural Fusions finale River Bann tour



# LESSONS LEARNT

## WE ARE ON A JOURNEY TO

- Learn how to do this
- To doing meaningful heritage practice in contested spaces is a process of reflection and self criticism for the facilitator

## We identified principles:

- 'Recognise the expertise in the room'
- 'Respect everyone's perspectives'
- 'Be relevant to the audiences'
- 'look at the others through their eyes, let others look at me with my eyes'

## We agreed key questions for heritage practice in contested spaces:

- 'How do we make evaluation useful?'
- 'Ask who's voice isn't present?'

## We acknowledged that:

- We are unreliable tellers of our own stories
- There are physical, emotional and intellectual responses to heritage practice in contested spaces
- There is a need to provide people with 'open' spaces to engage with memories of conflict in memory of conflict
- Heritage practitioners need to acknowledge :  
'You are boundary agents'  
'Put yourself in the middle and learn to "dance" '  
'Be honest about who you are'

## Participants recorded that the seminar had been:

- Thought provoking
- Inspirational
- Truly reflective
- Innovative
- Rejuvenating
- A meaningful opportunity to explore and share our experiences



Part of the MINOM tradition is to formulate a declaration and the discussion of different traditions prompted by this was in itself creative and informing. Coming out of the evaluative process and the growing confidence of the group, it was decided not to follow the route of making a series of statements, but rather to pose questions and challenges and these are listed below as the Limavady Declaration.

# LIMAVADY DECLARATION

## LIMAVADY DECLARATION

26th September 2013

We believe that it is the duty and role of everyone who engages with heritage to address the following questions and to revisit them as touchstones with which to validate their work.

1. How do we embody and demonstrate respect to everyone involved with what we do?
2. How can we make the engagement of participants in transformative experience central to our philosophy and practice?
3. How do we use, recognise and name all the expertise in the room, in equitable partnership that includes all participants?
4. Above all the other questions, how do we make sure motivation and outcome of our work is to do good with the widest section of society?

These questions shape and form practices that address, acknowledge and celebrate the complexity and diversity of human history and experience.

MINOM 2013



# NEXT STEPS

## NEXT STEPS

- Build a network and community of practice
- Embed the learning in our work
- Present a summary of CMS/MINOM Heritage Practice in Contested Spaces at the Commonwealth Association of Museums Conference Glasgow, May 2014
- Causeway Museum Service, University of Ulster Centre for Maritime Studies and MINOM plan to provide a two day programme, based on the Heritage Practice in Contested Spaces seminar, after the Commonwealth Association of Museums Conference, May 2014
- On the Brink 1914 – 1916 is a three year project by the two museum services, Causeway and Mid Antrim, building on the methodologies and outputs of the North East PEACEIII Cultural Fusions 'On the Brink 1912 - 1913' and 'Project of Plantation' as work shopped with participants during the seminar

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# ON THE BRINK

The Politics of Conflict  
1914-1916 Project

Encouraging Participation  
and New Perspectives  
through Heritage



– Spring 2017 the project  
community groups through:

bus tours  
of Dublin - War Memorial Guides - Volunteer initiative  
trials • Facilitated workshops





Images: St Aidan's Church; Participants with Helen at Market Yard Coleraine; St Aidan's Church team 'place mapping'.



Part of Emski  
Owen

Green  
Castle

Redd Castle

Loughfoyle

BERDASHES

Phillipps

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GO

GO

LIMAVADY

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