

## Perceptions of Northern Ireland - A Community Relations Perspective

By H. Eilish Boschert - intern for the Northern Ireland Foundation (NIF)

Northern Ireland is used as a case study for peacebuilding across the globe, attracting the attention and scrutiny of mediators, researchers, politicians, and students, like myself; however, learning about Northern Ireland is nothing compared to engaging with it, and engaging with Northern Ireland is a learning experience in and of itself.

Many refer to Northern Ireland as a post-conflict society, but I wonder if 'post-conflict' really suits the tenor of life here, where nearly everything, public and private, has socio-political implications. Instead, 'transitional' seems to suit the current state of affairs. Transitional implies a continuing effort toward transformation-- which is what I have witnessed during my time in Belfast. Nineteen years following the Good Friday Agreement, Northern Ireland is leaps and bounds ahead of the violence of the Troubles, but seems to have adopted a cold hostility - a state of division that reifies tribalistic sentiments.

Ultimately, I've discovered that the prevailing conflict in Northern Ireland is anything but simple: it is a multidimensional issue in which factors -- such as socio-economic disenfranchisement and political tribalism -- not only contribute to division in their own ways, but intermingle to the point of co-dependency. This complicates peacebuilding efforts that can realistically address only one issue at a time.

I am currently an intern for the Northern Ireland Foundation (NIF), a nonprofit NGO that promotes an engaged and shared Northern Ireland. I report on cross-community events including, but not limited to, workshops, lectures, film screenings, and political debates. The NIF's 'Our Shared Future' initiative seeks to promote dialogue concerning the current state of community affairs in Northern Ireland. By engaging with the community, the Foundation aims to support a cohesive society.

Clichéd, but true: 'ignorance is bliss' speaks to the parts of us that want to remain within our respective bubbles. It is easy to accept the familiarity of a single-narrative status quo. My time at NIF is about fostering a public voice; hearing, and being heard; developing conversations between communities after years of divisive conflict and trauma. Unlike the ease of homogeneity, attempting to create a diverse, multi-vocal space in the aftermath of armed-conflict is neither

With that being said, space needs to be reserved for situations and dialogue that make people feel uncomfortable and vulnerable. Part of integration is recognising your own role in society and taking responsibility for it—erasure of past injustices does not bode well for a unified future. Promoting dialogue is vital to transformation.

## PeacePlayers International – Northern Ireland

**Gareth Harper**, Managing Director

PeacePlayers International – Northern Ireland (PPI-NI) is increasingly being recognised locally for its work in bringing together children and young people from opposite sides of the traditional religious, ethnic and cultural divide in Northern Ireland. PeacePlayers in Northern Ireland, as it does in its sister projects in Cyprus, the Middle East and South Africa and now in the United States, uses sport to unite educate and inspire children and young people from divided communities through sport.

In 2016 PPI-NI was delighted to have its work locally acknowledged through receipt of core funding support from the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC). With funding provided by CRC, PeacePlayers supports those working with children and young people in realising and releasing the potential of sport for community relations and peace building work. It is our hope that key individuals in sporting, community and educational organisations will become more aware of the contribution of sport for community relations and peace building work and that there will be a greater willingness among public organisations to use sport as a tool to engage in cross-community activities.

PeacePlayers - Northern Ireland now is excited to share that PeacePlayers globally has been named a 2017 recipient of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Sports Award. The RWJF 2017 Sports Award is the highest honour for inspiring healthier communities through sport presented by the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated solely to health. This is a great honour that will enable us to further raise awareness of our work in Northern Ireland and beyond, as we strive towards a Northern Ireland and indeed a world where youth who play together can show that we can all live together.

To learn more about PeacePlayers [click here](#)



## Institute of Conflict Research & North West Migrants Forum

ICR and North West Migrants Forum have been working on a European project, made up of 12 partners from 9 different countries, exploring Online Hate Speech and Hate Crime. The eMORE project aims to gain a sound understanding of trends over the Internet, to allow comparative analysis at national/EU level, and to support the harmonised combating against hate-motivated offences at EU/national level.

### This is not a victim support APP

This APP does not provide any kind of assistance or support to victims of hate speech. The information submitted via the APP will be used by our team to get comprehensive knowledge of the phenomenon and better understanding of trends and hateful online habits across nine European countries. The data gathered will be further used to develop training programmes to address the growing phenomenon of online Hate Speech and Hate Crime. The local project will work directly with support agencies to provide current support services with ongoing data to enable them to tailor their responses to victims.



For further information on the project please contact:

Denise Hughes

Institute for Conflict Research

Unit 14, North City Business Centre

2, Duncairn Gardens,

Belfast BT15 2GG

Tel: 028 90 742682

Email: [denisehughes@conflictresearch.org.uk](mailto:denisehughes@conflictresearch.org.uk)



### Ensemble NI

Prime Cut Productions

Prime Cut are excited to be launching Ensemble NI, a series of FREE taster workshops delivered to community groups across Northern Ireland, funded by the Northern Ireland Executive. Groups will take part in 4 workshops using different art forms to explore themes of identity, culture and tradition on a personal, community and national level.

Ensemble NI is open to community group across Northern Ireland. These initial workshops will be delivered between July and September 2017. Following these initial workshops, there will be the opportunity to participate in a longer term with a high profile showcase event being held in March 2018. No previous experience of Arts Based Projects is required. We are particularly interested in working with groups based in hard to reach communities.

Prime Cut Productions are one of Ireland's foremost theatre companies. Formed in 1992, we are committed to producing excellent contemporary theatre that is accessible and entertaining for as wide an audience as possible. Prime Cut has

produced 40 highly acclaimed Northern Irish Premieres of the best of International Theatre as well showcasing the work of Northern Irish Theatre Artists across the Island of Ireland and beyond.

As well as our professional productions, we have run a number of high profile Community Engagement Projects, including The Place Between (2017), Re:Vision (2016), The Secret City (2015), Ensemble (2014), Kaleidoscope (2013), The Baths (2012), Demeter: Still Life Still (2011), Right Here, Right Now (2010), and The Heights (2009) More information on our Community Engagement Projects can be found at [www.primecutproductions.co.uk/outreach](http://www.primecutproductions.co.uk/outreach)

### Do You Want To Take Part?

If you are interested in your group taking part in Ensemble 3, or would like some further information on this exciting opportunity contact Matt Faris on [matt@primecutproductions.co.uk](mailto:matt@primecutproductions.co.uk) or on 02890 244 004. The project is limited to 10 community groups so we recommend an early registration of interest.

This project is funded by the Northern Ireland Executive



Prime Cut Productions is core funded by the Community Relations Council, Belfast City Council and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland



### Big Lottery Fund

Are you thinking of applying to Big Lottery Fund? Do you want to work with local people to help improve their lives and communities? We are looking for projects to put people in the lead and we have developed a short film to help explain what we mean by that. Watch the animation here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uzmc8AnqVik>

## Events

### SOMA Festival

**1<sup>st</sup> Annual Sheehy Skeffington Conversation.  
Conversations on the Arts, Creativity and Healing**

**Down Council Museum 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2017. 10.30- 3.30**

Are you interested in the interconnections of the Arts, Creativity Healing?  
If so, this conversation will provide you with a meaningful and enjoyable experience

To reserve a place email Mary at [sheehyskeffingtonss@gmail.com](mailto:sheehyskeffingtonss@gmail.com)

Cost including lunch £10

### Book Launch

***Macha's Twins, A Spiritual Journey with The Celtic Horse Goddess*  
Kate Fitzpatrick**

Bilbo's Bistro, Castlewellan, Thursday 13th July, 6.00-8.00pm

Macha's Twins, tells the story of Macha the Horse Goddess who cursed the men of Ulster for nine generations. The book is a living myth of the contemporary feminine spirit and a healing story for Ireland This is the story of the author's journey with contemporary women to find the healed feminine in the land and soul of Ireland and bring that light back into the province of Ulster. Kate Fitzpatrick has worked with the spirituality and transformative power of Celtic myth for over twenty-five years.

### Book Launch

***Winnie and George; An Unlikely Union*  
Allison Murphy**

Kings Inn, Castlewellan, Saturday 19th July, 3.00-4.30 p.m

A story of how two diametrically-opposed people got together, primarily through their shared passion for the rights of the working class. George, like many men of that era, was disillusioned by what he had witnessed on the Western Front. Winnie, embracing socialist ideology, had trod a very different path as a significant part of James Connolly's network, which had formed the 1916 insurgency.

Author Allison Murphy, painstakingly put together Winnie and George's story. She carried out meticulous research from material obtained via various records. She has used this wealth of information to create this story, throwing light and understanding about part of our troubled past.

### Language Café - The Language of Nonviolence

Saturday, 15th July, Urban Café , Castlewellan

Come along to Urban café and have an opportunity to engage in the concept, theory and practice of the Language of Nonviolence with other curious linguists. You will be welcomed and hosted by a few NVC practitioners.

### Commemorating 80th anniversary of the Battle of Jarama

Friday 4th August 12.00pm to 2.15pm, Shankill Road Library-Belfast

(Light lunch before the lecture)

Guest speaker Brian Hanley: "The Radical Thirties"

Chairperson: Jackie Redpath

After the meeting flowers will be laid on the memorial in Writers Square.

Organised by the IBCC in partnership with the Greater Shankill Partnership, Belfast and District Trade Union Council, Shankill Library, Trademark, ICTU Youth Committee.

As part of the People's Festival-Féile an Phobail

For further information contact: 0775195175

### The International Brigade Commemoration Committee present

An evening of song and music with Joe Solo and Eoghan O'Neill

Sunflower Pub (upstairs) Friday 4th August: 7. 30pm

Remembering those who fell in the valley of Jarama

"We have left that dark valley forever, But the memory will always remain,  
Of our struggle for freedom and justice, Side by side with the people of Spain"

As part of the People's Festival-Féile an Phobail

Pay at the door £10 waged £5 unwaged-further information:07751951785



If you would like to comment or submit an article for this bulletin or advertise a community relations event or publication, please contact Patricia poneill@nicrc.org.uk.

## Reclaiming the Bonfires; Women explore the international and local history and their use in cultural celebrations

Women's Resource and Development Agency

WRDA are delighted to announce a new programme that will enable women to explore the long, rich, diverse and shared history of bonfires internationally, and locally. This will help women explore their use in cultural celebrations today and how they can be used as culturally inclusive events.

Workshops will include:

- The history and international use of bonfires; From Witch Burning to Summer Solstice celebrations
- Local experiences of bonfires; When I was growing up.....
- Sharing our experiences and learning
- Ideas generation; Do you know what I think.....

Workshops in Community Relations Forum, The Baron Hall, 230 Antrim rd. Glengormley BT36 7QX contact Kathywolff1@aol.com 02890849314 Monday 7th & 14th August 7-9pm

Workshops in WRDA 6 Mount Charles, Belfast BT7 1NZ contact kellie.odowd@wrda.net Tel:02890230212 Thursday 3rd & 10th August 6.30-8.30pm

Workshops in Dee St. Community Centre 12-16 Dee St, Belfast BT4 1FT contact Kathy Watters 028 9045 8113 wattersk@belfastcity.gov.uk Wednesday 9th & 16th August 6.30pm-8.30pm

## Think Safety First when Building and Attending Bonfires

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS)

**NIFRS appeals to people to 'Think Safety First' when building bonfires by adhering to the following safety advice:**

- Site the bonfire well away from houses, garages, sheds, fences, overhead cables, trees and shrubs
- Bonfires should be kept to a manageable size
- As a rule of thumb, the bonfire should be a minimum of five times the height from property, ie, if the bonfire is 10 metres tall, it should be at least 50 metres from the nearest building
- Build the stack so that it is stable and will not collapse
- Never build a hut or den inside the bonfire

**NIFRS also appeals to 'Think Safety First' when attending a bonfire:**

- Do not burn foam filled furniture, tyres, aerosols, tins of paint, or bottles
- Responsible adults should look after lighting the bonfire. Before lighting the fire, check that no children or pets are hiding inside it
- Never use flammable liquids (petrol or paraffin) to light the fire – use domestic firelighters
- Keep everyone away from the fire – especially children who must be supervised at all times
- For an emergency keep buckets of water, a garden hose or a fire extinguisher ready
- At any sign of danger, or in the event of an emergency, dial 999 and ask for Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

For further information contact NIFRS Headquarters on 028 9266 4221

## Belfast MELA

27th August 2017

Join us at the Belfast Mela, the city's annual celebration of global cultures when tens of thousands of visitors pack Botanic Gardens to celebrate our people and diversity. The Mela transforms the park into a magical global garden filled with the sights, sounds and aromas of nations right around the world. Music, dance, arts and culture come together to create a heady, good humoured atmosphere which invites the world into the heart of our city.

For more information and tickets go to <http://www.belfastmela.org.uk/#home>

## Heritage and Nature: A Landscape of possibilities

Historic Environment Division, Department of Communities

European Heritage Open Days has been running in Northern Ireland for 20 years this year which is a milestone for us. It is an event that sees many private and public places of historical interest open their doors for free to the public, we also have many that put on events. This year there are over 400 openers and events across Northern Ireland. It is a European wide event with over 50 countries across Europe taking part and similarly organising events and opening the doors historic buildings many of which are not usually open to the public. We usually have a theme and this year it is -"Heritage and Nature: A Landscape of possibilities".

The dates are 9 and 10 September 2017, the brochure will be launched in August. In the meantime visit <https://discovernorthernireland.com/things-to-do/attractions/love-heritage-for-more-information>.

## New Books

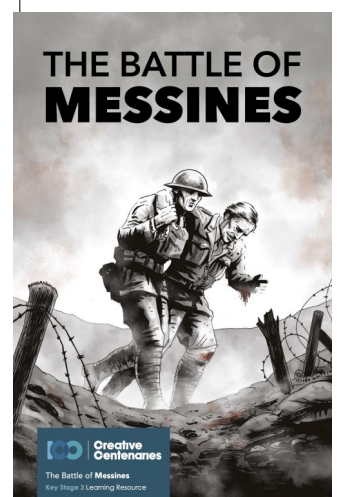
### Nerve Centre graphic novel and animation on the Battle of Messines

The Nerve Centre's Creative Centenaries project has produced a new graphic novel on the Battle of Messines, told through the experiences of real life characters.

The Battle of Messines began on June 7, 1917, almost one year on from the beginning of the Somme campaign.

Men from the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions, made up largely of unionists or nationalists, fought alongside each other for the first time during the First World War.

The new graphic novel, illustrated by Derry artist David Campbell, follows the experiences of Ballymoney man John Meeke and the Irish MP Willie Redmond, who fought for the 36th and 16th Divisions respectively.





Meeke, a stretcher bearer in the battle, administered aid to Redmond who had been shot and injured shortly after the attack began. Redmond was removed from the battlefield but later died from his injuries. Meeke was awarded the Military Medal for his bravery.

The Battle of Messines graphic novel looks at the impact of the attack through the eyes of both men, including how modern warfare tactics such as tanks and placing explosives deep under German lines were used effectively for the first time.

The resource has been funded by the Department for Communities and the Irish Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and produced in partnership with the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

David Lewis, Director of Communications at the Nerve Centre, said: "The resource is the latest in a series of graphic novels produced by the Nerve Centre exploring key events in Irish history and the First World War. They are a fantastic way of getting young people interested in the past and how these events are still having an impact on community relations today."

The graphic novel is accompanied by an education pack for Key Stage 3 pupils with background information on the battle and the two men as well as suggested digital learning activities for the classroom.

The Nerve Centre has also been involved in producing a 5 minute animation on the Battle of Messines in partnership with the Somme Museum, ahead of an exhibition at the museum later this month. The animation uses the latest 2.5D techniques to bring to life archive photographs of the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions.

For further information please contact:

Nerve Centre  
7-8 Magazine Street  
Derry~Londonderry  
BT48 6HJ

Or phone 028 7126 0562

## **Interface Barriers, Peacelines and Defensive Architecture**

Belfast Interface Project

[Interfaces PDF.pdf](#)

In 2012 Belfast Interface Project published a study carried out by the Institute for Conflict Research to identify and classify the known security barriers and associated forms of defensive architecture in residential areas of Belfast. This new publication seeks to update that research regionally and define what progress has been made during the intervening 5 year period to 2017 on 'reimagining', 'reclassifying' and / or 'removing' interface barriers and defensive architecture across Northern Ireland. This document draws significantly upon this latest research by The Senator George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Justice and Security at Queen's University Belfast while also bringing together photographs and past information from previous BIP research projects on interface walls and barriers.

This examination attempts to provide an overview of security structures, together with a comprehensive listing, including new photographs and descriptions of defensive barriers and interface walls across the region.

## Launch of Pioneering Peace Builder: A history of Holywell Trust by Ann Kelleher

Patricia O'Neill, Communications Manager, CRC

On the 22nd April I went to the Belfast launch of Pioneering Peace Builder: A history of Holywell Trust hosted by Ruairí de Búrca, Irish Joint Secretary Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It was an informal gathering involving a panel discussion with Ann Kelleher (author of the publication), and Eamonn Deane (Chair of Holywell Trust). Ann described the process of writing the book over a period of 3 years and Eamonn talked of his initial reluctance to the book but how it turned out to be a 'painless process'.

The book traces Holywell from its forerunners Bogside Community Association, Youthways and Yes! Publications, through to the current Holywell community. Ann states in the Preface

I have tracked Holywell Trust's many working relationships looking for patterns in how it devised, designed and delivered its variety of projects, finally deciding that there is no pattern in the policy-making way that usual organisations operate. For Holywell, the pattern is in the process not in the structure of project management. Using horizontal, open, collaborative decision-making, each project has its own structural attributes for how the work happens.

Eamonn Baker, one of the founders of Holywell further put their continued success down to listening and craziness – they have enjoyed a lot of laughs over the years.

The book is an interesting read and provides a blueprint of what good community development work is.

The book costs £10, to buy a copy contact

Holywell Trust  
10-12 Bishop Street, Derry  
028 7126 1941  
[hello@holywelltrust.com](mailto:hello@holywelltrust.com)

## New Guide launched - How to plan community festivals and other events

Causeway Coast and Glens Council

Are you a member of a community or voluntary group and would like more information on planning festivals and events?

Causeway Coast and Glens Council has launched a new guide providing groups with practical information on how to organise, promote and manage the process.

The guide will provide practical tips and information on how to deal with issues such as health and safety, insurance and how to handle the media.

Organising events can be a tedious task, and it is hoped that this guide with its range of contents can help structure the process in an easy and effective manner.

A copy of the guide can be downloaded from clicking on the link below.

For further information, or to request a hard copy of the guide please email [community.development@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:community.development@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

[Download here](#)