Bridging Ages Conference 2015

A Place, a Border – Different Stories

County Museum Dundalk, Ireland 2-5 June 2015

Dundalk is a border town situated in the north-east of the Republic of Ireland. It is approximately halfway between Dublin and Belfast. It has always been a border town. Historically its initial settlement lies in the 7th Century AD as part of the kingdom of the Conaille. Over the next 400 years this area was the site of territorial contention on an ongoing basis. With the arrival of the Anglo Normans in the 12th Century the town was located on the northern border of the differentiation between the Anglo-Normans and the native Irish.

More recently with the introduction of Partition in Ireland in the early 20th Century Dundalk again became a border town. With the advent of the 'Troubles' Dundalk was one of the towns to which people from the North fled.

Historically the town has a strong industrial tradition unlike most every other town in Ireland – railway, engineering, car and shoe manufacture, tobacco, distilling and brewing. However scarcely any of these industries remain. Today the town's geographical location continues to play a major role with both the railway and motorway linking Northern Ireland to the south (and vice versa), significant considerations in attracting new businesses and industries.

Dundalk is the quintessential border town.

Cead Mile Failte – A Hundred Thousand Welcomes!

County Museum Dundalk, Brian Welsh

Diversity Challenges, Will Glendinning, Maura Maginn

Draft program for the Bridging Ages conference

1 June

Arrival

2 June

Am

Welcome address
Bridging Ages introduction
Setting the Scene, Dealing with contested past - Diversity Challenges; County Museum Dundalk; Newry & Mourne Museum. Musical pieces from Aftermath Story-telling project

Pm

Workshop, the EU Grundtvig Project, "A Place and its Story", on dialogue and community building – organizations from Poland, Finland, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Iceland and Ireland

Evening

Visit the small historical town of Carlingford and the Cooley peninsula

3 June

Am

Time Travel event connected to the railroad in Dundalk in the 1880s, "Safety or Profit"
The focus and perspectives of the Time Travel method

Pm

Presentations and workshops from various countries and organizations
Evening program

4 June

Storytelling innovative methods, addressing issues of conflict and promoting reconciliation, use of drama and art, Examples from Ireland – Healing Through Remembering (Kabosh Theatre); Verbal Arts Centre (Crows on the Wire); Diversity Challenges (Green and Blue; Aftermath)
Examples from other countries
Irish night

5 June

Tour along the border and the impact of the conflict
Tour of Belfast and the painted peace walls