

ON THE BRINK

The Politics of Conflict
1914-1916 Project

LEARNING RESOURCE TOOLKIT



INTRODUCTION

'On the Brink: The Politics of Conflict: 1914-1916' was an ambitious project, financially supported by Heritage Lottery Fund and co-delivered by Mid-Antrim and Causeway Museum Services. The project aimed to enable local communities to uncover, document, share and inclusively remember histories of war and revolution during 1914-1916. Exploring the events of one hundred years ago reveals new perspectives on divisions and conflict in our society today. The project aimed to create a shared understanding of these events, avoiding the association of particular events with either nationalist or unionist identity politics.

The histories of war and revolution between 1914 and 1916 are often understood in exclusive terms, but the project revealed complex connections between local, national and international perspectives. The complexity and interconnectedness of these histories was explored through an extensive touring exhibitions and facilitated workshops programme and a Volunteer Tour Guide strand which provided interpretative tours of local sites of remembrance.

Our museum collections and local built heritage continue to play a vital role in enabling the interpretation of these histories. Research undertaken into local newspapers, letters and diaries reveal local perspectives and individual voices from the time, highlighting a range of contemporary often highly personal narratives from this period of international conflict and the re-configuration of former Empires.

LEARNING RESOURCE AIMS

To support continued interest within the local area, the knowledge and resources utilised throughout 'On the Brink'. The learning resource aims to improve accessibility to local museum collections, archives and other privately held material from the period and to create a lasting legacy from the project.

The different and often divergent resources developed within the learning resource reveal how the historic strands of 1914-1916 intertwine, enabling communities to discover and more inclusively remember the dramatic events of those years. The learning resource also aims to explore another dimension by studying everyday life within the local area. By placing these major political and military events within their social, economic and cultural context, it allows for a more detailed and comprehensive narrative of the 1914-1916 period.

TARGET USERS

- 1) **History teachers who can draw on local examples to support their teaching of the 1914-1916 period**
- 2) **Community groups or individuals who wish to explore what was happening in their local area in 1914-1916**

The 'On the Brink' learning resource has been created in conjunction with the teaching of the Key Stage III unit Ireland under the Union: 1916 & First World War. This unit incorporates the Home Rule Crisis (1900-1914), Political Events (1914-1918) and Events in Ireland (1919-1925). The learning resource is also valuable to the teaching of Citizenship and especially the key element 'Growing up in Northern Ireland'. While, the learning resource has largely been designed for Key Stage III students, Key Stage IV history students who are undertaking the Partition of Ireland 1900-25 unit would also benefit from the resource, supporting their learning and understanding of the 1914-1916 period.

In addition, the learning resource is fully adaptable for use by community groups. The focus stories and worksheets have been designed universally for both target audiences. It should be noted that the learning resource material does not aim to provide a detailed account of the political events and military campaigns throughout 1914-1916. Instead, the learning resource aims to support curriculum based learning in schools and community education projects by encouraging participation in heritage, critical learning and development of local history research skills.



Pupils of the Lady of Lourdes School, receiving a Workshop, delivered by Bryonie Reid of quarto, Ballymoney Museum, 15/09/16.

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

FOCUS STORIES

Focus Stories have been created through the detailed research undertaken by museum service staff and volunteers. The Focus Stories explore the impact of war and revolution in the 1914-1916 period through the stories of individual people from the local area. Focus Story themes include:

- 1) **Pro and Anti-Home Rule Campaigns**
- 2) **Active Service**
- 3) **1916: Easter Rising & Battle of the Somme**
- 4) **Life at Home**
- 5) **Local Women**
- 6) **Commemoration**

WORKSHEETS

To utilise the valuable research within the focus stories, six engaging curriculum linked worksheets have been developed. The six worksheets provide clear instructions, and each worksheet adopts a specific theme related to the project which are summarised below. Students are encouraged to investigate the focus stories before completing the worksheets to understand the period and several local personalities. The range of progressive activities within the worksheets encourage students to be creative, resourceful and imaginative in their work promoting a multi-perspective understanding of the 1914-1916 period.

WORKSHEETS INCLUDE:

- 1) **Unionism & Nationalism: Poster Exercise**
This poster exercise will allow students to identify symbols and emblems connected with unionist and nationalist culture during the period, understand the stereotypical divisions within society and consider the hopes and fears associated with Home Rule for Ireland at the time.
- 2) **Recruitment: Newspaper Source Exercise**
This worksheet asks students to analyse three primary sources from 1914 published on the topic of recruitment. This exercise encourages students to consider how events and sources can be interpreted in different ways and the reasons why.

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3) Easter Rising & Battle of the Somme: Newspaper Exercise

The objective of this exercise is to give students an understanding of events in 1916 and be creative with their ideas, relating the events to their local area.

4) 1911 Census of Ireland Research Exercise

This worksheet encourages students to undertake online census research, using the 1911 Census of Ireland to identify several local people. The individuals that students are asked to research are included within the focus stories.

5) Local Women

This worksheet is directly connected with the focus stories on local women. The worksheet is a simple exercise that asks students to match the names of several local women with the correct statement. The objective of this exercise is simply to develop an appreciation of the diverse role of women during the period.

6) Commemoration: Discussion Exercise

Students are challenged to discuss a progressive and innovative idea that locally commemorates the 1914-1916 period. This exercise encourages students to think critically in relation to a shared way of remembering.

DOWNLOAD GALLERY

A gallery of images is provided for download and use within classroom activities. Images within the gallery are arranged according to theme and improves online access to locally relevant archival and museum collections. The download gallery only reflects a small fraction of the digital image resources available, on the 1914-1916 period, from the Causeway and Mid-Antrim Museums Service and other museum and heritage organisations, who also contributed to this project. Teacher and community groups, interested in utilizing a wider range of archives can discuss their research needs with Museum staff whose contact details are listed at the end of this document.

PROFESSOR RICHARD GRAYSON, 'MILITARY HISTORY FROM THE STREET': FIVE STEP GUIDE



Professor Richard S Grayson provided invaluable research training to On the Brink 1914-16 Volunteers. Richard has kindly given his permission to reproduce his Five Step Guide to First World War Research which enables schools and community groups to conduct their own research into individuals that served and died during the conflict. Please click on the "Resources" box on the internet Home page of the On the Brink 1914-1916 Learning Resource Home Page, and select the appropriate document you require:-

"Military History from the Street" Five Steps for Community Groups" by Professor Richard Grayson

"Military History from the Street" Five Steps for Schools" by Professor Richard Grayson

Professor Richard S Grayson of Goldsmiths, University of London, works closely with community groups on remembrance. He is an associate member of the Northern Ireland WWI Centenary Committee, contributed to BBC NI's *Ireland's Great War*, co-edits www.irelandww1.org and chairs the Academic Advisory Group for the Digital Projects run by the Imperial War Museums. He authored *Belfast Boys: How Unionists and Nationalists Fought and Died Together in the First World War* (2009), and co-edited *Remembering 1916: The Easter Rising, the Somme and the Politics of Memory in Ireland* (2016).

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DR JOHNSTON MCMASTER



Dr Johnston McMaster has given strong support to On the Brink: The Politics of Conflict 1914-1916 project, by making a presentation at the launch event in April 2016, and by presenting a Key-note address at our closing Seminar, in February 2017. Dr McMaster has provided useful training to Museum Service staff and Good Relations personnel in partner Councils, in the sensitive tasks of dealing fairly and sensitively, with local histories of the 1914-1916 period.

Dr Johnston McMaster is senior researcher, writer and educator with the Ethical and Shared Remembering Programme 1912-1922, The Junction, Derry / Londonderry and with the Irish School of Ecumenics, Belfast campus. The programme has been delivered in various centres in Northern Ireland and Border Counties. He remains as Adjunct Assistant Professor with the Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin.

He is a regular broadcaster and in 2016, at the invitation of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission he delivered two lectures in Parliament Buildings on the 1916 Easter Rising and the 1916 Battle of the Somme as part of the Assembly's contribution to the Decade of Centenaries.

Dr McMaster has kindly given his permission for the text of his 'On The Brink 1914-1916' presentation, made at the launch of the 1916 Impact and Legacy exhibition at Mid Antrim Museum, the Braid, Ballymena, in March 2016, to be made available. Please click on the "Resources" box on the internet Home page of the On the Brink 1914-1916 Learning Resource Home Page, and select Dr Johnston McMaster's presentation :-

"Remembering 1916 and the Politics of Identity" by Dr Johnston McMaster

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A considerable number of people and institutions have supported the 'On the Brink' project. The Mid-Antrim and Causeway Museum Services are truly indebted for their help and assistance throughout the duration of the project and would like to thank the following:

PARTNER COUNCIL

Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council.

GOOD RELATIONS STAFF

Antrim & Newtownabbey Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and Mid and East Antrim Council.

MID-ANTRIM MUSEUM SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Etta Mann, Leith Burgess, Joanne Doherty, Brian McKay and Alan Nicholl.

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CONTRIBUTORS

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LOCAL GROUPS

Roe Valley Ancestral Research Group, Robert Quigg VC Commemoration Society, Royal British Legion Limavady, Friends of Ballycastle Museum, Dervock Historical Society, Ballintoy Archaeological and Historical Society and Building Ballysally Together, Glengormley Community Relations Forum, Carrickfergus Historical Society, Royal British Legion Ballymena, Ballyclare Historical Society, Ballymena Historical Society, Glenravel Historical Society.

ACADEMICS AND RESEARCHERS

Janis Bolan, Nigel Henderson, Philip Orr, Professor Richard Grayson, Chris Manson and Dr Johnston McMaster..

ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS

Kilmainham Gaol Museum, National Library of Ireland, Imperial War Museum and National Museums of Northern Ireland.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

Below is a useful list of websites with a range of additional resources.

CCEA Understanding 1916 - Understanding 1916 is a hub for some of the key learning aids and information sites related to the main events of 1916.

http://ccea.org.uk/curriculum/key_stage_3/understanding1916

Census of Ireland 1901/1911 - The 1901/1911 Census of Ireland represents an extremely valuable part of the Irish national heritage.

<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>

Commonwealth War Graves Commission - A website dedicated to 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died in both world wars.

<http://www.cwgc.org/>

Creative Centenaries - Official website for the Decade of Centenaries in Northern Ireland. A number of interactive resources have been developed including a comic book series. <http://www.creativecentenaries.org/resources>

Ireland WW1 - A website to link researchers and community projects during the Decade of Commemoration. <http://www.irelandww1.org/>

Irish Military Archives - 1916 lesson plans developed for teachers using primary sources. <http://www.militaryarchives.ie/en/collections/online-collections/1916-in-transition>

Irish War Memorials - The Irish War Memorials Project is a developing inventory of war memorials in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

<http://www.irishwarmemorials.ie/>

National Library of Ireland - Online exhibition of the 1916 Rising.

<http://www.nli.ie/1916/>

National Museums Northern Ireland - Collection of various exhibitions and resources relevant to the Decade of Centenaries.

<http://nmni.com/home.aspx>

Public Records Office Northern Ireland - PRONI records can be used to help explore and understand this era of change, conflict and social upheaval.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/public-record-office-northern-ireland-proni/decade-centenaries>

ON THE BRINK: THE POLITICS OF CONFLICT

1914-1916 VOLUNTEERS

The contribution made by all Volunteers has been an essential and vital one to the success of 'On the Brink 1914-1916'. Volunteers named below have all completed certified Tour Guide training, and are available to deliver talks and tours on the history of the 1914-1916 period in their local areas. For more details please contact Museum staff using the contact details given at the end of this document.



Leith Henderson Burgess



Alan Nicholl



Alistair Harper



Betty McNerlin



Brian McKay



Etta Mann



Nina McNeary



Kevin McGowan

For further information and advice on this project,
please contact Mid-Antrim Museum Service

Call: 028 2563 5077

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Or Museum Services Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

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