



The essential brief on the Irish churches

Jennifer Johnston to open 'Lives Remembered' Exhibition at St Patrick's Cathedral

St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, is creating a space where all of the people of Ireland, as well as international visitors, can come to remember people who have been affected by conflict.

The 'Lives Remembered' exhibition will be officially opened on July 28, the 100th anniversary of the declaration of war by Austria–Hungary on Serbia, by Irish author Jennifer Johnston. It will remain in place for four years.

Saint Patrick's has been an important centre of remembrance for hundreds of years. Nearly two hundred plaques and monuments throughout the building



Edward Bisgood of Bushy Park Ironworks, cathedral administrator Gavan Woods, Dean Victor Stacey and education officer Andrew Smith at the new 'Tree of Remembrance' in St Patrick's Cathedral.

remember individuals or families. In the past, those remembered in the cathedral were confined to members of the aristocracy or from a particular niche of society. Those remembered who died as a result of conflict were generally male officers who fought in the British Army.

The new exhibition examines its role in remembrance in the past and presents a new vision for the future. At the centre of the new exhibition there is a new monument called the “Tree of Remembrance” which is a tribute all those who have been affected by conflict. This sculpted steel tree is surrounded by barbed wire and will serve as a reminder of the ugliness and brutality of conflict. Visitors to the Cathedral will be invited to tie small tags with thoughts, memories or prayers for loved ones affected by conflict. Over the course of time the barbed wire will be replaced by a wall of messages of hope.

The exhibition, which is located in the cathedral’s North Transept, comprises three main elements. An audio–visual facility via tablets positioned around the space, shows videos of interviews on a number of themes including the affects of World War I on the cathedral’s community and remembrance. Another tablet contains Ireland’s memorial records detailing the names of almost 50,000 Irish people.

Meanwhile, 14 panels look at the issues of conflict and remembrance. On one side of the North Transept the emphasis is on outreach and response to World War I and conflict within the cathedral’s walls over the centuries. Other panels focus on the Church and war and the history of remembrance in St Patrick’s Cathedral.

The third element is the Tree of Remembrance, which was designed by Andrew Smith, Education Officer and Curator of the exhibition and executed by Bushy Park Ironworks. This new monument differs from the other monuments in the cathedral in that it is inclusive. St Patrick’s education assistant, Caoimhe Leppard, explains that there are plaques around the base of the monument in different languages inviting people to leave a message of remembrance for a loved one who has been affected by conflict.

“We wish to encourage Irish people to come to the cathedral so that everyone in Ireland has a place to come to remember – no matter what their faith or gender or which conflict they were affected by,” she says.

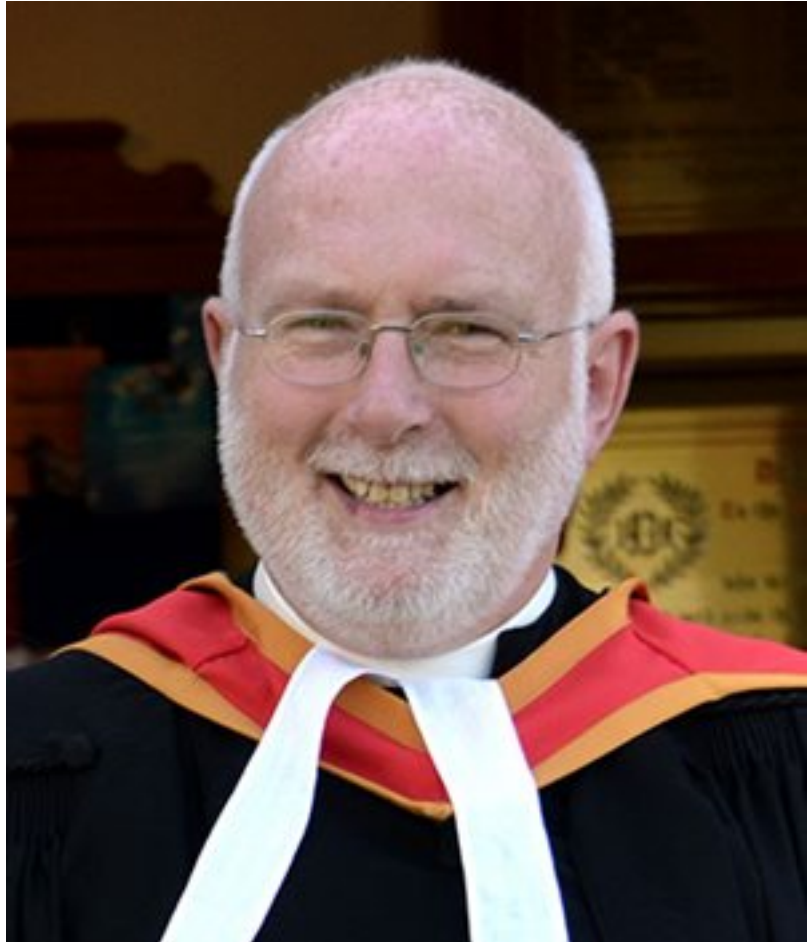
The exhibition will be launched by Irish author, Jennifer Johnston, on Monday July 28 at 6.30 pm in the cathedral. This year marks the 40th anniversary of her book *How Many Miles to Babylon*, the complex tale of the affects of World War I on two men who had been friends since childhood.

All the information contained on the exhibition panels can also be viewed online on the cathedral's website at <http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/Lives-Remembered.aspx>.

Thanksgiving service for the life of Rev. Dr. Stewart Jones

The service was led by Rev. John Hanna, Moderator of the Derry and Donegal Presbytery, who gave an address in appreciation for the life and ministry of Dr. Jones.

Dr. Michael Barry, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, who participated in the service along with local ministers and colleagues of the late Dr. Jones, brought greetings from the General Assembly and led the prayers of thanksgiving and intercession.



Rev. Dr. Robert Buick, Clerk of Presbytery and Minister of Carlisle Road and Crossroads Presbyterian Churches, paid tribute to Dr. Jones:

Stewart Jones was a big guy, not just physically, but mentally and spiritually. He was born on 8th September 1957, the oldest of three children (Stewart, Jacqueline and James) to Bea and the late Jimmy Jones. He grew up in Bessbrook, where as a member of the local scout pack (where his father was the leader) his passion for the outdoors and nature first showed itself, attending Newry High School.

Friends often joked at the number of degrees that Stewart acquired (I counted at least six in his entry in the PCI directory of ministers, a student of history, his MTh was in the area of the history of Unionism, and his PhD a study of Middle Eastern history), one of the early impetuses for which was proving wrong a primary school teacher who told him that he would never be academic! This was combined with a deep love of finding out about things and how and why they worked which was manifested in everything from his love of history, his deep interest in computer hardware and software and interest in all sorts of machinery. He had a deep passion for God's word and the publication he was most proud of was his Bible Reading programme, Through the Bible in 365 days, encouraging people to read the whole Bible in a year.

Having responded to the call of God into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, Stewart studied at Union Theological College and served as an assistant at McQuiston Memorial (East Belfast) where he was Ordained in 1983. He received a call to serve as minister of Second Castlederg in 1984 (with Alt 1984-87) at a time of many violent murders and empathised deeply with the ongoing suffering of so many families from earlier killings. He himself had been deeply affected as a teenager by the Kingsmill Massacre and the sight of so many coffins lined across Bessbrook Presbyterian Church. In 1990 he received a call to Kilcooley (Ards), where he served as minister until 2004, when he was called to the congregation of Donemana (Foyle). In addition to serving as minister of this congregation, Stewart was also Clerk of Foyle Presbytery from 2005-2009 and as Presbyterian Chaplain at Altnagelvin Hospital from 2010.

Stewart was deeply committed to the need for society here to move forward and another pivotal time was his year as Moderator of Presbytery when he became deeply involved with the Churches Together project working with Bishop Ken Good (Church of Ireland), Monsignor Eamon Martin (Roman Catholic Church) and Rev Peter Murray (Methodist), particularly in the distribution of copies of Luke's Book to every home within the city for the UK City Of Culture year. He was delighted to be involved in distributing some additional copies in the Donemana area with Rev Judy McGaffin and Father Eamon McDevitt.

During that year, Stewart and I had the honour of representing Presbytery at the installation service in St. Patrick's cathedral, Armagh of Eamon Martin coadjutor Archbishop. Stewart also loved working with the other chaplains in Altnagelvin Hospital, who became valued friends as they met while visiting and shared in various services together. He was committed to the Irish

Churches Peace Project in Strabane in recent months. I have personally received many calls and messages from ministers of many denominations, with whom he had come into contact, to express their sorrow at Stewart's passing.

Another deep passion was global mission. He was deeply affected by a month spent working in Flanders, Belgium for Operation Mobilisation when he was 19 and spent much time trying to encourage his various congregations to be informed about missionaries and to pray for them. His interest in Africa grew over the years and a visit to Malawi in 2009 by Stewart and Patricia and 4 other members of Donemana Congregation was very special.

A relationship was built with Mtunthama congregation and Stewart was deeply committed to their new church building programme and their orphan work. He was thrilled earlier this year when after the publication of cookery books and a praise evening we sent out money which was used to buy tin for the roof. On 4th July this year, Stewart cycled with many others in what has become an annual sponsored cycle for Malawi. The donations in lieu of flowers will also go to Mtunthama Congregation.

Jackson, an elder in the Mtunthama congregation, whom Stewart and Patricia met on their visit in 2009, has informed us that they had planned to start putting up the roof on the new church today but have chosen to postpone this until tomorrow and instead are praying with us and on Sunday they are to have a special service of thanksgiving for the life of the man who had Mtunthama at his heart.

More at -

<http://www.presbyterianireland.org/News/Article/July-2014/Thanksgiving-service-held-for-the-life-of-Rev-Dr-S?feed=cfd8e3f5-88c6-46c8-9f48-6f31a698b9b7>

Archbishop Jackson welcomes Commission of Investigation

The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin has stated:

"I welcome today's announcement that Judge Yvonne Murphy is to chair the Commission of Investigation into mother-and-baby homes.

“It is my hope that this inquiry will lead to deeper compassionate understanding of what people have experienced and provide lessons for the present and the future.”

Engage Connor Youth cook up a treat

Members of the Engage Connor Youth Council ensured no one went hungry during the annual Summer Madness camp at Glenarm Castle.

They were on hand providing free food, from burgers to bananas, to the dozens of young people from parishes across Connor who attended the weekend festival from June 27–July 1.

The happy campers basked in glorious sunshine over the weekend, and among the chefs was none other than the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, who proved a dab hand on the grill.



The Twelfth: ‘it ain’t all burger vans and bouncy castles’

On Saturday I attended one of the flagship Twelfth demonstrations in Markethill, County Armagh, at the invitation of Orangeman and Ulster Unionist mayor of Craigavon, Colin McCusker.

Barton Creeth on Slugger O’Toole web site - The day was arranged through a friend of mine who comes from a Catholic background in North Belfast. Our intention was no greater than to enjoy a day out with friends and to learn a bit more about Orange culture. I joined commentator and cartoonist, Brian John Spencer; investigative journalist, Lyra McKee; the Fine Gael deputy mayor of Fingal, Ted Leddy; and Australian-born SDLP activist and recent council candidate, Justin Cartwright. While all of us are outsiders to the Orange institutions in some form or another, we were all made to feel incredibly welcomed and included in the day’s events.

If you’ve never attended a country parade, I’ll describe the atmosphere. The streets are lined with people relaxing in lawn chairs, drinking tea and tins of

beer, and eating sarnies and crisps. Kids run about and give parents a



Lyra McKee, Justin Cartwright, Ted Leddy, Barton Creeth, Colin McCusker, Brian John Spencer

chance to chat and catch up. Guitarists play pop songs, stands sell coffee and tray bakes. The only explicitly political stand I saw was Willie Frazer and FAIR set up under a banner that read, “OTR: Only Terrorists Run.” Then, of course, the town is bedecked in red, white and blue. Union flags, bunting and Northern Ireland flags cover every corner of every street. It’s not a beacon of inclusiveness—if by inclusiveness you mean culturally neutral. But by no means is it the “hate fest” some would like to mischaracterise the Twelfth as.

The feeling in town is pleasant, celebratory and family-oriented. Bands from all over Northern Ireland and Scotland join with different Orange lodges and parade down the high street towards a field where bouncy castles, burger vans, a stage and a podium await them. As they march, the lodges carry banners that are intricately painted and tell different stories of history and religious events. The men wear immaculate suits beneath their orange collarettes. Each collarette is then decorated in personalised pins which tell the story of each Orange member’s life and beliefs, making each collarette remarkably personal: RAF, Bible, regional lodge, etc.

The music is markedly different than in Belfast Twelfth demonstrations. Belfast parades usually never contain brass, pipe or accordion bands. Rather, Belfast bands are almost entirely flute bands. The tune selection is different

too. Without trying to stereotype, there are some Belfast bands that don't ever seem to learn more than "The Sash," "Billy Boys," and "God Save the Queen." Country bands, on the other hand, play a collection of sacred and traditional tunes, of which I heard "It's a long way to Tipperary" and "Tell me Ma." My experience of Blood and Thunder bands is that the music is secondary to the experience of marching. The bands at Markethill, however, took pride in their collective discipline and trained musicianship. The pipe bands play with a solemn dignity and precision I would almost associate with high liturgy. Then there are the Lambeg players. These traditionally-crafted drums are loud and heavy, and some of the older players were assisted by friends who carried the drums from the front to share the burden of the weight.

I didn't catch what was said at the podium because I was being treated to lunch and tea by Colin's family, and didn't pay much attention, which, to be fair, seems to be the norm. While sitting and chatting, UUP DRD Minister Danny Kennedy came by for a chat. He met our Fine Gael and SDLP friends then hurried off to catch up with his lodge. The short chats and brief reunions of people meeting in the field are an important part of the day.

The Twelfth means something different to each participant. Some enjoy the camaraderie experienced by playing music with others. Some enjoy the connection the day gives them to history and their family heritage. For some, marching is a sacred rite. Some want to assert their Britishness and, sadly, antagonise their neighbours. But most seem to simply enjoy the day as a family event. Not all of what happens on the Twelfth is nice. Some engage in heavy drinking. And in some parts of Northern Ireland recently, there were instances that indicate there are deep problems with sectarianism, racism, and a fear-based hatred within loyalist communities. This must be condemned outright. That said, Justin Cartwright had his SDLP election poster burned on a Sandy Row bonfire. That did not prevent him from feeling welcomed and comfortable in Markethill.

It's unfair, I believe, to characterise the entirety of a culture based on the deviant and hateful behaviour of a minority within that culture. Indeed, this form of reductivism is sectarian. Yet there are serious issues that need to be addressed. "It ain't all burger vans and bouncy castles!" as one respondent cautioned on Twitter in response to tweets Justin put out about his experience. It is important for those who love the traditions and culture associated with the Twelfth to interrogate why in some parades, some bands do seem intent on stoking sectarian tensions; and why some people put racist and hateful paraphernalia onto the bonfires. But I believe that the "nicer bits"

of the Twelfth aren't just gloss over the "nasty bits"—the history of domination, triumphalism, sectarianism, and bigotry that many commentators point to. What I witnessed was an open, gracious, and welcoming culture proud of its unique traditions, if not somewhat wary of the future of its survival.

Religious diversity remains a cause of tension and violence not just here in Northern Ireland, but all across the world. The solution isn't to eradicate religion from public life. In the case of the Twelfth, I would like, [as the catholic priest Fr. Magill recently said in the Irish News](#), to see more Protestantism demonstrated on the Twelfth. What's needed is more religious humility.

The Calvinist theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, says the solution to religious diversity

requires a very high form of religious commitment. It demands that each religion, or each version of a single faith, **seek to proclaim its highest insights** while yet preserving an humble and contrite recognition of the fact that all actual expressions of religious faith are subject to historical contingency and relativity. **Such a recognition creates a spirit of tolerance** and makes any religious or cultural movement **hesitant to claim official validity for its form of religion or to demand an official monopoly for its cult.**

A pluralist, multi-cultural society in Northern Ireland must include a protected place for Orange traditions. Without trying to deny the history of violence, harm, intimidation and fear caused to many Catholics and Nationalists by those that participate in the Twelfth, I would also say that many people need to reevaluate their attitudes towards Orange culture. While there is more than burger vans and bouncy castles, there is likewise more than the instances of bigotry and triumphalism.

At the same time, as the Orange Order seeks to find a place for itself in the new Northern Ireland, I would advocate it show more religious humility. "Religious humility," Niebuhr says, "is in perfect accord with the presuppositions of a democratic society... **Faith ought to be a constant fount of humility; for it ought to encourage men to moderate their natural pride** and to achieve some decent consciousness of the relativity of their own statement of even the most ultimate truth." For the rest of us, instead of judging a religious and cultural tradition by its worst elements, we should seek to see those traditions live into and promote the highest form of its ideals. In the case of Orangism, this is the promotion of religious and civil liberties for all.

<http://sluggerotoole.com/2014/07/15/the-twelfth-it-aint-all-burger-vans-and-bouncy-castles/>

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