

Derry sisters at opening of heritage centre honouring missionary aunt who died at Auschwitz



Deirdre McDowell, right, with her sister Jane McIvor and broadcaster Fiona Bruce

The memory of a Scot who gave her life to help protect Jewish schoolgirls during the Second World War will be kept “alive” in a new heritage centre officially opened this week.

Jane Haining's story of heroism, bravery and personal sacrifice is being celebrated at Dunscore Church in Dumfries and Galloway. Her niece Mrs McDowell of Londonderry, said she was proud to represent her family at the event.

A short film featuring pupils from Braes High School in Polmont near Falkirk, who performed a monologue based on the personal testimonies of two of the boarding school matron's former pupils, is on display.

The scene includes a depiction of Miss Haining's arrest when she told sobbing children "Don't worry, I'll be back by lunch" as she was led away.

The centre was opened by Lord-Lieutenant of Dumfries, Fiona Armstrong on what was [Holocaust Memorial Day](#).

The annual event is dedicated to the memory of people who suffered during genocides in mainland Europe, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.



Jane Haining

Ms Armstrong, a broadcaster to trade, said:
“Here in Dumfriesshire, we are very proud to honour the memory of such a brave and selfless woman.

“This new heritage centre will help to keep Jane Haining’s memory alive and it is all tribute to those in Dunscore who have made it possible.”

Miss Haining’s niece, Deirdre McDowell, unveiled a Historic Environment Scotland plaque in memory of the missionary, who worked at the Scottish Mission School in Budapest, Hungary during the 1930s and 40s.



Jane Haining died at Auschwitz Birkenau in 1944 at the age of 47

She refused to return home after war broke out, despite advice from church officials, saying the children needed her in the "days of darkness".

The Christian martyr was posthumously honoured by the UK Government for "preserving life in the face of persecution" and is the only Scot to be officially recognised at Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Israel.

Mrs McDowell of Londonderry, said she was proud to represent her family at the event.



A memorial cairn for Miss Haining stands near Dunscore Church

“It is a fitting tribute to Jane’s memory that a heritage centre has been opened in the village where she was born,” she added.

“The people of Dunscore have been wonderful in getting this centre up and running so there is a comprehensive, lasting memorial to her life.

“I am excited about the prospect of visiting the village where I was born and it will be lovely to be able to walk around a room in the church and look at memorabilia.”

Rev Iain Cunningham, convener of the Church of Scotland's World Mission Council, said: "This year's theme for Holocaust Memorial Day is the power of words – words that can make a difference both for good and evil.

"So it is fitting that at this time we remember the poignant words of Jane Haining.

"When instructed by the Church to return home for her own safety, she wrote back 'if these children need me in days of sunshine, how much more do they need me in days of darkness?'

"Jane's words live on like a light shining in the dark places of today's world."

'Hear Us Now' Festival of Choirs at Belfast Cathedral this Saturday

Join the 4 Corners Festival for an evening of choral music as they celebrate the role of community choirs in Belfast, this Saturday, 3 February 2018, 7pm in St Anne's Cathedral, Donegall St, BT1 2HB

Music has the power to move, inspire and unite us. Alongside this, local choirs offer friendship,



support and a real sense of community. Compered by Jude Hill, this event will showcase the joy-giving work being done by community choirs across the corners of our city.

Choirs include Feile Women, a group for women across Belfast and beyond; Harmony North, an inter-denominational choir of post-primary school students; ParSonik, a singing group set up to support those living with Parkinson's Disease; Hill Croft School Choirs and Sing For Life, a choir set up in partnership by Cancer Focus and the Crescent Arts Centre for those affected by cancer. Following refreshments, the evening will close with Compline by Schola Cantorum from St Peter's Cathedral.

‘What intrigues me most about these choirs is their story,’ says Fr Martin Magill, a founding member of the festival. ‘Whether those are stories of community, friendship, of hardship, I am excited to see and hear these stories be told through songs.’

Bishop John Fleming launches new listening process in the Diocese of Killala

Last night in the Newman Institute, Ballina, Bishop John Fleming will launch the Killala Diocesan Assembly Listening Process. The objective of the Listening Process is to gather insights from across the diocese so as to inform Church planning for the future.

Speaking in advance of the launch, which is the first of its kind in the diocese, Bishop Fleming said, “the late poet John O’Donoghue said, ‘In modern Ireland, you’ll find the most searching and penetrating analysis of what is going on, and what we need to do, not among the priests or religious or theologians but among the people. So, we need to ask the people what they think and what’s going on’. These are important words in the context of our Listening

Process here in the Diocese of Killala. It is our plan that, during the months of February and March, an extensive listening process will take place in all of our parishes. This is an inclusive initiative and I invite everyone to take part: the young and not so young, those who participate in Mass each weekend, those who attend occasionally and those who may no longer walk with the Church for whatever reason. In particular I am anxious to hear the voice of young people in this process.”

Bishop Fleming continued, “I wish to emphasise the importance of the listening aspect of this process, so that we really can hear what is being said. In what we are doing I am guided by the recent words of Pope Francis, ‘Communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance. Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness.

Listening allows us to get things right, and not simply to be passive onlookers, users or consumers. Listening also means being able to share questions and doubts, to journey side by side, to banish all claims to absolute power and to put our abilities and gifts at the service of the common good.’ It is my hope that the Diocesan Assembly will meet in full session at the end of

June, when the proposals which will emerge from this Listening Process will be put to its 300 delegates, who represent every aspect of Church life in the diocese, in order that they can be voted on. These proposals, when accepted, will then become diocesan policy and form the basis of our Pastoral Plan for the Diocese.”

Bishop Fleming thanked all those who had contributed to the process so far and encouraged everyone to avail of the opportunity offered by the listening process.

- The Diocese of Killala consists of 22 parishes and includes portions of counties Mayo and Sligo. Killala has a Catholic population of about 37,000 including 37 priests. Saint Muredach is the patron saint of the diocese. See www.killaladiocese.org
- The Newman Institute, Ballina, is a charitable organisation which works in conjunction with the Diocese of Killala. A core aim of The Newman Institute is to provide an opportunity for people to learn more about their faith through accredited and non-accredited faith formation courses. The Newman Institute also seeks to address the ongoing need for Adult

Religious Education and Faith Formation in the Diocese of Killala and beyond.

Lent Bible reading resource for young adults



Church of Ireland Youth Department staff Simon Henry, Barbara Swann and Steve Grasham with the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke launching Fuel, CIYD's Lent resource.

Fuel, seeks to help young people to read the Bible regularly over Lent. The booklet includes a reading plan for John's Gospel and a 50–page journal.

Fuel is free and copies are available from the CIYD offices in Belfast (028 9082 8890) and Dublin (01 497 8422), and from diocesan youth officers and youth council representatives. Orders can also be placed by email at admin@ciyd.org

Captured nun pleads for Pope's help in new video

A group affiliated with Al-Qaeda has released footage of a captured nun pleading for Pope Francis to help secure her release in West Africa.

A video of Gloria Cecilia Narváez was released by the group Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin and intercepted by SITE Intel Group, a group which monitors jihadist activity.

The Colombian's appeal was translated into English as saying: "I ask you to help with my freedom and do the impossible and get them to release me."

Local church leader, Bishop Jean-Baptiste Tiama told the Fides news agency: "We have seen the video and we are happy to know she is alive and this urges us to continue our prayers and efforts for her release."



Sister Gloria was taken captive in the Mali - close to the border of Burkina Faso - on 7th February 2017.

She was accused by the group, whose named translates as the Group to Support Islam and Muslims, of "preaching Christianity and supporting the crusaders in Mali".

One member suggested that relatives of Sister Gloria should send money to pay for a ransom and hinted that other hostages were also being held.

Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin has been blamed for a recent spate of attacks across Mali, including a shooting at a Radisson Blu hotel in the capital Bamako in November 2015 which left 20 people dead.

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