



Somme tribute led to footballing family's double discovery



Rev Alan McCann and Cllr Billy Ashe with Ghost Tommies in the background.

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A Carrickfergus clergyman and former Irish League footballer has welcomed a poignant art initiative commemorating the fallen of the First World War, the News Letter reports.

Rev Alan McCann of Holy Trinity Church of Ireland in Carrickfergus has been heavily involved in the project locally.

His great grandfather William Kelly was killed at the Somme. Rev McCann said: “This initiative is something which is close to many people’s hearts, including my own.

“When I became aware of the Ghost Tommies I thought they were a wonderful idea, portraying hugely powerful symbolism. “I have a copy of William’s death notice from the time and the story has captivated me over the years.

“Coincidentally, I played Irish League football for Portadown and Glenavon. Last year, Glenavon erected a memorial to all the players who had played for the club and lost their lives at the Somme, including William. “This was the first time I heard he had been a goalkeeper for Glenavon – and 75 years later I would play for the same team. I had no idea.

“I am delighted Mid and East Antrim Borough Council has embraced this vital project and look forward to seeing the Tommies throughout the area.”

The sculptures will feature in Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus in memory of all those who lost their lives in the conflict.

The council is supporting the project following a proposal earlier this year by Councillor Billy Ashe MBE. Mr Ashe said: “The Ghost Tommies are powerful and striking displays in recognition and in honour of all those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Irish GAFCON participants are ‘out of touch with laity’

Two bishops from the Evangelical wing of the Church of Ireland have been criticised by clergy for their attendance at GAFCON in Jerusalem last week ([News, 22 June](#)), Greg Ryan writes in the Church Times

The Bishop of Down & Dromore, the Rt Revd Harold Miller, and the Bishop of Kilmore, the Rt Revd Ferran Glenfield, have variously been described as schismatic, out of touch with the laity, and disgraceful, for supporting GAFCON, which was formed after the election of the openly gay Bishop Gene Robinson to the see of New Hampshire in 2003, and opened a branch in Ireland last April.

Both clergy and laity in the Irish Anglican Church have rejected the final statement of GAFCON at its closing session, which called on the Archbishop of Canterbury to exclude from the next Lambeth Conference, in 2020, bishops who supported sexual activities that it considered contrary to scripture.

The former Archbishop of Dublin, Dr John Neill, said of Bishop Miller: “I never thought a former colleague would applaud a schismatic, unloving organisation. Did he agree to that horrible final statement which seeks to exclude bishops from Churches of the Anglican Communion with which GAFCON disagrees? Also note [that] the leadership

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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of this organisation is from a Church not in communion with Canterbury.

“Bishops supporting all this need to think carefully about their vows to maintain the unity of the Church.”

The Dean of Waterford, the Very Revd Maria Jansson, told *The Irish Times* on Sunday that the Bishops’ attendance at GAFCON had undermined unity within the Church. “How can Bishops Harold Miller and Ferran Glenfield reconcile the vows they made at their consecrations as bishops ‘to maintain and further the unity of the Church’ with their support of GAFCON, which stridently endeavours to undermine that very unity?”, she asked.

Dean Jansson said they had both demonstrated, by their attendance, how some senior clerics in the Church were out of touch with the average member of the Church of Ireland. GAFCON’s agenda was a tactical use of homophobic and misogynistic rallying calls, she said, “to gain a base from which they can access [Church of Ireland] governance, resources, parishes, schools, and [the] young. This has to be called out for what it is: religious extremism.”

The Rector of Celbridge, Co. Kildare, the Revd Stephen Neill, said that the attendance of the two bishops at GAFCON was “an absolute disgrace”.

“In the GAFCON black-and-white world, there is only a ruthless certainty which is hard and unforgiving, and leaves no room for the doubt and questioning which leaves for a richer, fuller faith,” he said.

On his return to Down & Dromore, Bishop Miller said that he came home nourished and enriched. He described

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GAFCON as “a very important resource and fellowship by individuals and Churches who have stood for conservative Christian teaching and values in parts of the world where provinces have changed their doctrine and ethics. This has been largely, but not uniquely, in terms of marriage.”

A spokesman for the Church of Ireland said on Tuesday that neither bishop had attended as a representative of the Church of Ireland, but presumably in a personal capacity.

GAFCON does not have a large following in Irish Anglicanism.

Presiding Bishop Curry leads wave of excitement for evangelism heading into General Convention

The Most Rev. Michael Curry, in his three years as presiding bishop, has regularly described Episcopalians as being part of “the Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement,” underscoring the church’s call to evangelism, reports David Paulsen of ENS.

The Episcopal Church’s push for greater evangelism is not new. Curry’s embrace of his self-proclaimed role of “chief evangelism officer” continues [years of growth in the church’s organizational and financial support](#) for such efforts.

“I believe that we had a move toward increasing our work in evangelism and church planting even before the election of Michael Curry as presiding bishop,” said the Rev. Frank Logue, an Executive Council member with a longtime focus



Curry's embrace of his self-proclaimed role of "chief evangelism officer" - he has led the way in the past 16 months by presiding at large, public revivals in dioceses around the church,

on evangelism. Curry has further elevated those efforts since 2015, Logue said.

General Convention

approved \$1.8 million for church plants and Mission Enterprise Zones in the 2013-15 triennium, and \$3.4 million was allocated for such ministries from 2016 to 2018. The Evangelism and Church Planting Committee, which Logue chairs, has been assigned a resolution (A005) [that would approve \\$6.8 million in spending](#) over the next three years to build on recent successes of these "holy experiments."

"I see there being a move within the church to invest within this area," Logue said. And while church planting plays a major role – Episcopal News Services recently [profiled several examples of successful grant recipients](#) – the church is investing in innovation at all levels, including in established congregations and by dioceses.

Eight resolutions have been assigned to the Evangelism and Church Planting Committee so far, though more may be added by the July 6 filing deadline. Among them is a

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measure (A030) submitted by Executive Council [to renew funding of a small evangelism grant program](#) at \$100,000.

Those grants are limited to \$2,000 for congregations and up to \$8,000 for dioceses or regional ministries, and typically they support one-time events rather than the ongoing work of church plants, Logue said. Like church plants, some of these smaller initiatives may provide models for new ministries churchwide.

“We’ve seen some good things happen with a small amount of money,” said Logue, who serves as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Georgia.

Evangelism is one of three priorities that General Convention set for the current triennium, along with racial reconciliation and care of creation. The three will serve as focal points for separate joint sessions of General Convention in a [new series of panel discussions called TEConversations](#).

The discussion of evangelism will be at 2:30 p.m. July 7, and the panel will feature the Rev. Lauren Winner, a priest and author; Iowa Bishop Alan Scarfe, who led revivals at every congregation in his diocese last year, and the Rev. Daniel Velez-Rivera, a church planter in the Diocese of Virginia. The racial reconciliation discussion is July 6. Care of creation will be the topic July 10.

Bangor Mission week highlights power of prayer

THE Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention meets for the 82nd time later this summer, with events in Belfast,

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Dollingstown, Lurgan and Magherafelt as well as venues in Bangor itself, The Irish News reports.

'Pray the Lord of the Harvest' is the theme for the week. The main speaker will be Alistair Begg, the senior pastor at Parkside Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

The Scot has ministered in the United States for 30 years and is the voice behind Truth For Life, a Christian teaching and preaching ministry that broadcasts on radio.

Convention chairman Tom Clarke said that Dr Begg would be leading the week's Bible studies during the week, which runs from August 24 to September 1.

"As a well known author and speaker, we hope many people will join us to hear what he has to say to us through God's Word," said Mr Clarke.

The majority of events will be held at Bangor's Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church. The neighbouring Baptist Church will also host events.

Mr Clarke said that 'Pray the Lord of the Harvest' "reflects upon the importance of prayer to the convention from the very outset in 1937 and it has always been an integral part of each year's programme".

"The establishment of a weekly prayer meeting which runs throughout the year and is now reaching its 80th birthday to support the work is another clear indication of the importance which has always been attached to the role of prayer in the convention," he said.

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"Key speakers for this summer include acid-attack survivor Pastor Umar Mulinde, who will be making the journey from Uganda to Bangor, along with a host of other international speakers from Spain, Dubai, Malaysia, Israel, India and Haiti."

Petr Jašek from Release International, which has been monitoring and reporting Christian persecution around the world for 50 years, will be the main speaker on the opening night on Saturday August 25, which will take place in the Presbyterian Church's Assembly Buildings in Belfast.

The story of Amy Carmichael, as written by Etta Halliday, will also be performed and music will be led by New Irish Arts.

"A few other mission agencies will be using the Convention to celebrate anniversaries, such as SIM - Serving in Mission - and SASRA, Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association," said Mr Clarke, who said the Bangor Worldwide committee was grateful to Ards and North Down Council for its support.

- For more information on the Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention, visit their [website](#) or follow them on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Artist's 10,000-mile journey to see Northern Ireland church window she made in 1964

A Northern Ireland-born artist has returned to see her stained-glass window in a Rostrevor church more than half-



Artist Paddy Robinson

a-century after she created it, Alf McCreary writes in the Belfast Telegraph.

Paddy Robinson, originally from Bessbrook in south Armagh, created 'The Tree Of Life' window in 1964 when she was a 19-year-old student at the Belfast College of Art, training under Edward Marr.

The beautiful artwork was presented to St Bronach's Church of Ireland as a gift from Isobel Foster Kennedy, a benefactress of the church, and installed in 1965.

It was placed there in memory of Colonel Donald and Grace Kennelly, who lived in St Bruno's House in Rostrevor.

However, by that time Paddy had emigrated to Australia, where she trained in engraving and became a distinguished stained-glass artist with many commissions Down Under and elsewhere.

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She returned briefly to Northern Ireland in 1969, where she saw her work in the Rostrevor church for the first time.

Her recent return to the church was a special event, her arrival in Rostrevor reading like an artistic detective story.

Two of St Bronach's parishioners - Shelagh Roberts and Pauline Coffey - had spearheaded an initiative to raise funds for urgent repairs and restoration of the church, which dates from 1821.

£120,000 has been raised in the past three years, and the women have carried out research on the various windows, plaques and other historical artefacts. They discovered through the internet that the only living artist with a connection to the church was Paddy.

When they discovered she was coming back home for a visit, they invited her to Rostrevor.

Paddy, who also made a nostalgic visit to her native Bessbrook during her recent trip, said: "Although I trained at the Belfast Art School, I always felt at home in the Bessbrook and Rostrevor area, and I still do.

St Bronach's Church is scheduled to reopen after its renovation later this year.

Isle of Man diocese to review alleged abuse by clergy

Victims of alleged child abuse by Church of England (CofE) clergy have been urged to come forward after calls for a fresh inquiry on the Isle of Man, BBC reports.



The present Bishop of Sodor and Man (left) was consecrated in June 2017

Last week a report examining the Church's "flawed" Past Case Review (PCR) said it failed to identify at least 22 cases of possible abuse.

Sodor and Man is one of seven CofE dioceses whose efforts were deemed "inadequate".

A diocese spokesman acknowledged "shortcomings" in its record-keeping.

The investigation by Sir Roger Singleton was due to be published next month, but was released earlier following an investigation by BBC News.

He said the Church's ["flawed" 2010 investigation, said it "failed to give a complete picture" of the abuse.](#) and called for new inquiries to be held in seven of the dioceses investigated, including the Sodor of Man.

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- [CofE 'needs to review' abuse claims](#)
- [CofE 'botched its abuse inquiry'](#)
- [Church 'faces years of abuse revelations'](#)

The PCR looked at some 40,000 files detailing accusations but Sir Roger was critical that some dioceses, including Sodor and Man, "did not know where the files were".

Diocesan spokesman Rev Canon John Coldwell said: "Although a comprehensive review of past safeguarding cases was carried out in 2007-9, we acknowledge shortcomings in record-keeping then which means we need to repeat the exercise.

"This will give us an opportunity to learn any lessons, but more importantly, be as sure as we can be that positive action was taken following past safeguarding incidents."

The Bishop of Sodor and Man, The Rt Revd Peter Eagles, welcomed the review saying it was vital that victims and survivors of child abuse "received their due and proper support".

"If you have reported an incident in the past and felt it had not been dealt with properly, or there is an incident you have never felt confident enough to report, please contact us. We will take your report seriously and investigate it thoroughly."

The six other dioceses listed are Rochester, Ely, Lichfield, Salisbury, Winchester and Sheffield.

There are presently no police investigations on the Isle of Man.

Well-known Dublin priest leaves the priesthood after 'falling in love'

A well-known priest based in Dublin has left the priesthood after falling in love, the Irish Mirror reports.

Fr David Halpin, 45, was based in Clondalkin's Neilstown Parish but has left to pursue romance.

He told the Irish Star: "I have left the priesthood, I have fallen in love and that's it, so it is a private reason and I wouldn't be wanting to make any more comment because it's not myself anymore, there's a family now."

He added: 'I've not in any way fallen out of the church.'

he former priest last year made the headlines when he was heckled at the funeral of murder victim Darragh Nugent, [Dublin Live](#) reports.

Fr Halpin said: "The truth is we are here today because one person decided that they wanted another person out of the way.

"One person made a decision that they had a license to order a hit, that they have the power of life or death over another.

"We are here because one person thought they were so important that someone else's life could simply be extinguished.

"Who is responsible for us being here today? That person. The small minded person who made that decision.

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"But there are more who share the responsibility. The one who pulled the trigger, and the one who drove the get away car."

News briefs

+++Garden partying at the Aras

Bishop Burrows and the Reverend Trevor Sargent attended a garden party at Aras an Uachtaran to mark bliain na Gaeilge. They were there representing Cumann Gaelach na Eaglaise.

+++Presbyterian team in the Ukraine

Please pray for the work and witness of the team of 12 from Ballyclare, Cairncastle, First Islandmagee, First Larne, Templepatrick & Woodvale congregations, who departed this week to lead an English summer camp in Transcarthpathia, Ukraine. bit.ly/2cgVbSa

+++Sunday's Songs of Praise to mark NHS70 anniversary

SOP is at the 1st NHS hospital Trafford General; JBGill joins paramedics with their chaplain, and Claire McCollum hears moving stories from a senior manager and a trainee doctor. SongsofPraise Sunday 1 July @BBCOne 1.30pm and bbc.in/2tHBgT5 in the UK.

+++Belfast parish working trip to Rathlin island

Revd Canon John Auchmuty and a group of parishioners from St Columba's, Knock are all set to make their second visit to St Thomas's Parish Church on Rathlin Island. The group visiting Rathlin, which is in Connor diocese, will include St Columba's Parish Organist, Dr Joe McKee, and

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members of the Parish Choir. They made their last trip across the North Channel as a group in August 2013. Canon Auchmuty will conduct a service of Holy Communion in St Thomas's at 11.30 am and after a picnic lunch, the group will explore the island before catching the 5.00 pm ferry to Ballycastle. As the weather promises to be beautiful so a smooth crossing is anticipated! Worship will continue as usual in St Columba's, Knock, on Sunday.

+++Summer break for Derry Cathedral Choir

On Saturday, the Cathedral Choir will assist with the Wedding Dress Festival once more by singing at the 12.30pm wedding. Music is by Johann Sebastian Bach (Jesu, joy of man's desiring).

Then on Sunday, they invite you to join them for a service of Choral Eucharist at 11.00am. Music is by William Mathias (Third Communion Service) and Charles Villiers Stanford (O for a closer walk with God).

This will be the last choral service sung by the Cathedral Choir before their summer break. They return in September. After another very busy term for the Cathedral Choirs, the Ladies Choir will now take over by singing at the 11.00am Sunday morning services throughout summer.

The Choral Ambassadors American Choir will be singing at a lunchtime concert on Tuesday 24th July at 1.10pm.



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