

The Northern Ireland Archaeology Forum

Annual Report

2009 – 2010.



The Northern Ireland Archaeology Forum was established in 2006 to facilitate co-operation across the sector and to promote archaeology at both a public and political level. A strategic plan and management structure were devised and a dedicated Coordinator was agreed to be necessary to deliver the programmes, publications and activities of the Plan.

Following a successful launch in October 2007 in conjunction with a Time Team visit to Northern Ireland, funding was sought to employ a co-ordinator to take the organisation forward. A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund was unsuccessful, but Funding was gained in 2008, with support from NIEA Built Heritage, the Heritage Council and The Council for British Archaeology.

In March 2009 a co-ordinator was appointed, enabling the Forum to begin to fully deliver its strategic plan.

Key Activities 2009 – 2010

Membership:

- Increase from 17 organisations to 77 (full list Appendix 1)
- Database – Expanded to over 535 organisations, groups and individuals.

Publications:

- **InSite** – the Newsletter of NIAF, published bi-annually – June 2009, November 2009.
- **Archaeology Enriches Us All (AEUA)** – originally published 2007 – redesigned and updated.
- **Archaeological Sites of Counties Down and Armagh** – published for the road show event in Banbridge, a redesign of AEUA with additional information on the archaeology of the region. This was hoped to be the first of a series promoting regional archaeological sites.

Heritage Survey

- Conducted in association with NIEA. Included as part of the NIEA Archaeology Days Brochure along with data collected at the Military Mayhem event at Hillsborough Fort, June 2009.
- For full survey results see Appendix 2.

Forum Board Meetings:

- 6th March 2009 – NIEL offices, Loopland Drive
- 25th Sept 2009 – Bridgewater Retail Park, Banbridge.

Membership

Forum membership in March 2009 stood at 18, mainly drawn from the academic, professional and museum sectors. In order to expand the membership a database of over 500 potentially interested individuals and organisations was developed. By March 2010, the Forum had expanded to 88 organisations, along with numerous interested individual members of the community. This growth allowed NIAF to reach a wider cross section of the “heritage community”, local museums, Councils, businesses, historical societies and NGOs (see appendix 1). All local museums are now members, including regional bodies such as Causeway Museum Services and 16 of Northern Ireland’s 26 councils are affiliated, along with Louth in the Irish Republic. Eight local historical societies have become members along with the Federation of Ulster Local Studies, the umbrella body for such societies across the province. This expansion in both the numbers and range of organisations has been mutually beneficial:

- NIAF publications and events can be distributed and promoted widely. The Federation of Ulster Local Studies, for example, can distribute information to members of affiliated groups.
- Events such as “Travel in Time” can draw on a great deal of support in terms of exhibition materials, staffing and publicity.
- Local societies have been able to approach NIAF for speakers at events, in turn allowing us to deliver our messages to them.
- Member organisations such as museums and heritage centres have a direct point of contact when looking for archaeological support and expertise.
- Businesses have the opportunity to promote their services to other members.

In order to fully realise these benefits, it is important that members make use of the newsletter and website to inform others of events, training and publications.

Publications:

Archaeology Enriches Us All - The “manifesto” of the Forum, this document was redesigned and reprinted. A second version was produced to coincide with “Travel in Time”, this time including information on sites of archaeological interest in Counties Armagh and Down. It was envisaged that further versions of the publication would follow – Fermanagh & Tyrone and Antrim & Londonderry.

InSite – the Forum newsletter – was distributed twice in 2009. Each issue was of 12 pages and included articles on recent archaeological excavations, forthcoming events and member services. Copies of the initial publication were mailed to those on the Forum database along with all MLAs. E-versions were sent to key contacts within member organisations for distribution to their staff. Printed copies were also

distributed through members such as museums, councils and visitor centres. In total 1500 copies of each issue were distributed in this way, with the winter issue also distributed at "Travel in Time". Due to budget and environmental constraints future issues will be distributed electronically.

Seminars and Conferences:

Issues in Archaeology - 22 May 2009 – Temple of the Winds. Identified current areas for action and informed future NIAF activities and work areas.

On 22 May the National Trust hosted a meeting of the Forum in the beautiful Temple of the Winds, Mount Stewart. There was an excellent turnout, with representatives of 21 organisations taking part in a very productive meeting. Following short presentations from members including Dr Mike Heyworth of CBA and Prof Gabriel Cooney of UCD and HMC, workshop discussions addressed the future work of NIAF. The afternoon plenary session yielded many useful ideas which will be developed in the coming months. High priority will be given to devising a strategy for ensuring that the Review of Public Administration delivers protection for the historic environment.

The Review of Public Administration and Archaeology - 2 July 2009 – Ulster Hall. Establishment of RPA and Outreach Working Groups, leading to Road Show.

John Price of Local Government Division DoE gave a short presentation outlining the structure and timeframe of the Review of Public Administration (RPA). To date much work has been done on the implementation structures and legislation. It is planned for the Statutory Transition Committees to be in by January 2010 and the full legislative programme through with the new Councils established in May 2011. However, there is no funding for the 'change' or capacity building; an economic assessment exercise is currently underway and ultimately the Executive will be requested for a sum (maybe between £60 and £100 million) for implementation. Now is the time to talk to Transition Committees about Community Planning and structures, no firm decisions yet made, though there will be CP pilots running from Jan 2010.

Mr Price took questions from Forum Members addressing the key areas of planning and how to influence the transition and statutory committees. They are now working on how they can coordinate work across councils and what capacity building they will require. He is working with other groups and offered to keep us informed as events unfold.

Archives and Collections - 28 January 2010 – Ulster Museum. Identification of some possible mechanisms and agreement to conduct survey of artefacts held by members.

This meeting focussed on a second area of concern raised in the May meeting – archive and collections. A general discussion followed short presentations giving business, government and research perspectives. It was agreed that the Forum would survey members to assess the current archive situation. The results would be distributed to members and within government to inform future discussion.

Structure

A structure was devised of a Management team, a NIAF Board and the NIAF Forum.

Board Meetings (2)

March 2009 (NIEL offices): Initial meeting to introduce the new co-ordinator to the board and to agree short term work goals and the discussion topics for the first full Forum meeting in May.

Sept 2010 (Banbridge – Outlet Centre): This meeting centred on the forthcoming roadshow, allowing board members to see the exhibition area and consider the support and assistance needed.

Management Meetings.

A management team of Prof Sue Christie, Prof Brian Williams and Malachy Conway met monthly to oversee the work of the co-ordinator.

Travel In Time Archaeology Road show:

- An interactive exhibition at the Outlet Shopping Centre, Banbridge, December 4th – 22nd 2009.
- Artefacts from the Loughbrickland by-pass duelling scheme displayed for a six month period Jan 2009 – February 2010
- The event was attended by nearly 2500 people,
- 1500 NIAF newsletters and copies of AEUA distributed
- Valuable local press coverage was generated, along with publicity for member services and heritage issues.
- A launch event was attended by 56 people and included Leo O'Reilly Permanent Secretary DoE, Liam Hannaway Chief Executive of Banbridge District Council plus several other councillors.

The Travel in Time road show was envisaged as a way of engaging local communities and councils with the archaeological heritage. The event was the first of its kind in Northern Ireland – bringing together forum members from across the sector – in the unique setting of a Christmas retail park. In doing so the road show reached a new audience as well allowing the Forum to work with local businesses. Perhaps more importantly it brought Forum members together in creating a substantial event for the first time.

NIEA – staff, exhibition materials, transport and financial support. Northern Archaeological Consultancy – staff and exhibits. ADSNI – staff and exhibits. National

Trust – staff and exhibition materials Banbridge Council – exhibition materials and financial support. UAS – staff. Lisburn Museum – staff and exhibits. Loughbrickland Historical Society – staff. Queens University – staff and exhibits. Causeway Museum Services – lighting. Belfast Council – staff and lighting. NIEL – staff and exhibition materials. Navan Centre – interpreters, exhibits. Down Museum – exhibits. Fermanagh Museum – exhibits. Ulster Museum – staff and exhibits. Living History Company – interpreters and exhibits. Lough Neagh Partnership – staff. Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork – staff.

The Outlet at Bridgewater Park, Banbridge provided a 3000 sq ft unit free of charge, along with substantial logistical support.

The exhibition was in three phases – a window display of local artefacts was put in place in September, publicising the work of NAC at Loughbrickland and the forthcoming event. This was followed by a launch and public opening between the 3rd and 20th of December and finally a return to a window display in the New Year. Over 2500 people visited the exhibition, allowing NIAF to promote its key messages and members their services.

Travel in Time @ the Outlet – summary

Numbers attending

Thu 3 rd (Launch)	Ad 113 Child 1	Sun 13 th	Ad 170 Child 40
Fri 4 th	Ad 70 Child 70	Mon 14 th	Ad 43 Child 5
Sat 5 th	Ad 305 Child 108	Tue 15 th	Ad 50 Child 7
Sun 6 th	Ad 200 Child 50	Wed 16 th	Ad 40 Child 2
Mon 7 th	Ad 84 Child 10	Thu 17 th	Ad 50 Child 10
Tue 8 th	Ad 51 Child 10	Fri 18 th	Ad 51 Child 18
Wed 9 th	Ad 61 Child 8	Sat 19 th	Ad 152 Child 42
Thu 10 th	Ad 40 Child 6	Sun 20 th	Ad 117 Child 24
Fri 11 th	Ad 63 Child 8	Total Ad and Child	Ad 1849 Child 479
Saturday 12 th	Ad 189 Child 61	Total	2328

Members Participating (contribution)

NIEA Built Heritage (staff, pop ups, material and transport).

NIEA Carrickfergus Castle (Stalls).

NIEA Peatlands Park (repro dug out).

Banbridge Council (Display cabinets, transport, lights, tables, catering at launch).

Lisburn Museum (staff, pop ups and display materials).

Fermanagh Museum (travelling exhibit).

National Trust (staff, slideshow).

NAC (staff, artefacts).

ADSNI (staff, artefacts).

QUB (staff, artefacts).

Causeway Museum Services (lights).
Armagh Council (display items, Living History interpreter).
NIEL (staff, etc).
The Living History Company (living history interpretation).
Belfast City Council (staff, cables).
Loughbrickland Historical Society (staff).
Ulster Museum (staff, display).
Down Museum (display).
UAS (staff).

Press/Radio Coverage – Banbridge Chronicle X 2, Banbridge Leader, Shine FM, Belfast Telegraph.

NIAF publications distributed – Winter Newsletter X 1500 approx, AEAU also approx 1500

Further information requests/additions to mailing list and individual membership 143.

Direct Costs to NIAF (Approx)

Printing of Newsletter and AEUA –	£1400
Printing of images -	£ 350
Sand	£ 80
Heater Hire	£ 120
Lights	£ 40
Display Materials	£ 30
Cables	£ 10
Total	<u>£2030</u>
Less contribution from Outlet (sponsorship of AEUA print)	£ 662
	<u>£1368</u>

Brief Assessment of the Event.

The event was popular with both members and the public. It provided a valuable opportunity to highlight the work of archaeologists and to promote member services. In terms of information distributed, public feedback and expressions of interest it was a great success. We have had requests from Coleraine, Belfast and Craigavon to bring the event to their areas, as well as a return to the Outlet.

A number of possible improvements could be made:

- We should reconsider the opening hours in future; weekdays were relatively quiet, although in museum terms the numbers were healthy. However since we are relying on volunteer staff it is perhaps unreasonable to ask members to forego normal work for such numbers.

- Publicity wasn't great. We were relying on the Outlet marketing team, who were distracted by the planning issue surrounding the proposed new Tesco store on site.
- We should aim to be able to use less staff, by seeking support to purchase secure cabinets.
- NIAF itself lacked visual presence at the event. We need larger pop ups etc promoting the organisation, its aims and objectives.
- It was envisaged that similar, although perhaps slightly smaller, events would be held in Belfast, Coleraine and Omagh in 2010/2011. However the loss of the co-ordinator position requires a reassessment of the concept if it is to be repeated.

Other activities.

Educational Involvement -

- Organisation and assistance – Educational Aspects of CAF/NIEA excavation programme, Bellaghy, Tully Castle
- QUB Young Archaeologists Field Trip – Devenish Monastic Settlement

Assistance with member events and activities.

- Downpatrick Museum: Archaeology road show
- Participation in, and assistance in production of, Hidden Heritage series 2
- Assistance in production of Hidden Heritage series 3
- Council for British Archaeology - Community Archaeology Conference, Sept 2009
- Council for British Archaeology - Assistance with Community Archaeology Survey, July 2009
- Assistance with co-ordination of Plantation of Ulster Commemoration committee, NIMC.

Appendix 1: NIAF Members, Feb 2010 (Groups and Organisations)

Northern Ireland Environment Agency	Council for British Archaeology	The Heritage Council
Queens University Belfast	Institute for Archaeologists	Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland
Northern Ireland Environment Link	Gahan and Long Archaeological Services	University of Ulster Centre for Maritime Archaeology
Ulster Archaeological Society	Archaeological Development Services	Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork
University College Dublin	The Historic Monuments Council	Northern Archaeological Consultancy
Farrimond McManus Ltd	RSK Group Ltd	Headland Archaeology
Annie Given Archaeology	Margaret Gowan and Co Ltd	Countryside Consultancy
Scottish Archaeological Research Framework	The Society of Antiquaries of Ireland	Cultural Reserve Development Services
The National Trust	Institute of Technology, Sligo	Belfast City Council
Banbridge District Council	Armagh City Council	Ards Borough Council
Fermanagh District Council	Magherafelt District Council	Limavady District Council
Derry City Council	Craigavon Borough Council	Larne District Council
Strabane District Council	Cookstown District Council	Newry and Mourne Council
Lisburn City Council	Down District Council	Louth County Council
Coleraine Borough Council	National Museums Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Museums Council
The Braid – Mid Antrim Museum	Mid-Antrim Museum Services	Flame – the Gasworks Museum of Ireland
Newry and Mourne Museum	Enniskillen Museum	Derry City Heritage and Museum Service
Causeway Museum Services	The Ulster Museum	Centre for Migration Studies
The Linenhall Library	Lisburn Museum – Irish Linen Centre	Down County Museum
The Navan Centre	Armagh County Museum	North Down Museum
Lough Neagh Partnership	Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust	Strangford Lough Management Advisory Committee
Elevated Aspects	Irish Arms	The Living History Company
Achill Field School	Quarry Products Association	Federation for Ulster Local Studies
Ballyhalbert Historical Society	Killultagh Historical Society	Glenelly Historical Society
Dromore Diocesan Historical Society	West Tyrone Historical Society	Loughbrickland Historical Society
Ballysaggart Environment Group	Cappagh Historical Society	

Appendix 2: Heritage Survey Results

<i>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about heritage?</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>		<i>Tend to agree</i>		Agree Total	<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Strongly disagree</i>		Disagree Total	<i>No Answer</i>	
Heritage helps to promote regeneration in our towns.	79	70%	32	28%	98%	2	2%			2%		
Heritage creates jobs.	77	68%	36	32%	100%							
Heritage encourages tourists to visit NI.	102	90%	9	8%	99%			2	2%	2%		
Heritage is not relevant to me.	6	5%	5	4%	9%	30	27%	64	57%	82%	8	7%
Heritage should only be preserved if it does not delay development.	7	6%	7	6%	12%	47	42%	52	46%	88%		
Councils should have greater responsibility for managing and promoting monuments in their local area.	42	37%	32	28%	74%	7	8%	14	16%	24%	17	15%
Only great monuments and buildings count as heritage.	4	4%	4	4%	8%	45	39%	60	53%	92%		
All the people of Northern Ireland can share in our heritage.	92	81%	15	13%	94%	4	4%	2	2%	6%		
Heritage plays a valuable role in the cultural life of this country.	89	79%	19	22%	98%			2	2%	2%		
A central organisation is required to ensure an integrated approach to the protection of our archaeological heritage.	72	64%	22	19%	83%	4	4%	2	2%	6%	13	11