

Seamus Heaney

Digging



"My grandfather cut more turf in a day than any other man on Toner's bog"

Bogs have been part of the consciousness of this landscape for centuries. They have inspired poetry, provided a window on the past, a source of warmth and a home to the richest of ecologies. The Lough Neagh landscape has more than its fair share of these riches.

Peat joins the built, natural and cultural elements of our heritage like nothing else. Of course, there are challenges in any talk of bogs and there are often problems of perception but the opportunities of this unique part of our landscape are immense.

The bog is not only a reservoir of carbon trapped by the plants that grew at its surface; it is a repository of information about our past and particularly about the ways communities used or abused the landscapes that supported them.

This conference, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, will we hope be the beginning of a conversation around the value of bog lands to us all. We invite you to come along to this day and start our journey towards unlocking the song of the bog.

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Song of The Bog

Conference Programme



Heritage ~ Past ~ Present ~ Future



Lough Neagh Discovery Centre
Oxford Island

10th May 2017
9.30am - 4pm



Order of Events

09.00 Registration
09.30 Welcome
09.45 Eamonn Kelly
“ Secrets of the Bog Bodies ”
10.10 Dr David Wilson
“ Change, climate and the Bog ”
10.30 Dr Benjamin Gearey
“ Hidden Landscapes – Heritage and Lessons ”
10.50 Keith Stanford
“ Peatlands Park – Its journey to Nature ”
11.00 Question and answer session
11.10 Coffee/Tea break
11.30 Nessa Cronin
“ Deep mapping – bogs and conversations ”
11.45 Workshop sessions
13.15 Lunch
14.00 Prof Mike Baillie
“ Bog oaks – Their message in history (Dendrochronology) ”
14.20 James Rainey “ Bog Love ”
14.35 Trish Fox
“ Connecting science and stories ”
14.50 Question and Answer session
15.00 Coffee/Tea Break
15.15 Workshop discussion
15:45 Final comments and close

Prof Mike Baillie is currently Emeritus Professor of Palaeoecology, in the School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University, Belfast. Much of his work was carried out around the shores of Lough Neagh. He was one of the first to recognise the existence of global environmental downturns as shown by synchronous growth reductions in tree-ring chronologies around the world (Baillie, 1994)

Dr Nessa Cronin is a Cultural Geographer and Lecturer in Irish Studies, Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway, with a special interest in community mapping especially of marginal landscapes. She has published widely on Irish writing, cultural geography and community mapping practices. Nessa is co-editor of, *Landscape Values: Place and Praxis* (2016) and the forthcoming volume *Lifeworlds: Space, Place and Irish Culture* (2017).

Dr Eamonn (Ned) Kelly former Head of Antiquities National Museum of Ireland. He was in charge of the Irish and Foreign Archaeological Collections. He is recognised as one of the world's experts on the importance of bog bodies and what they teach us about the past

Dr Trish Fox – Ecologist Ulster Wildlife – The local stories of the bog - Dr Trish Fox is an ecologist and senior conservation officer for peatlands at Ulster Wildlife. A former journalist, she is a graduate of Queen's University Belfast and completed a doctorate with the University of Western Australia where she looked at eucalypt woodlands of the wheatbelt, the perceptions of the first European settlers and what that revealed about our landscape preferences.

Dr Benjamin Gearey University College Cork – Environmental Archaeologist with a special interest in wetland archaeology and paleoenvironments. He has worked on a major HLF project on the Hidden Landscapes of Hatfield and Thorne Moors. His major research interest now is in heritage policy especially ecosystem services frameworks for future management of wetland environments.

Dr David Wilson lives in Donegal and is a Bog Biologist – ecosystem services and natural resource management in relation to climate change – cutaway peatlands – worked on Bogland project and co-author of “The Bogs of Ireland – An introduction to the natural, cultural and industrial heritage of Irish Peatlands.

James Rainey – Biologist and bog artist – Bog Love - is a conservationist with wide ranging interests in marine, freshwater and terrestrial Irish ecosystems. He is currently working for marine issues professionally; restoring fen and grassland in my free time. Having grown up near Garvagh, James has tramped most of the bogs in the Bann Valley in search of sundews,