
Archaeology Grant Scheme 2022 Final Report

1. Title: Associate Professor

First name: Jessica

Surname: Smyth

2.

3. Grant programme: Archaeology Legacy Projects

4. Year awarded: 2022

5. Title of project: Ballyglass Archiving and Publication Project

6. Summary of report (Min. allowed 100 words)

Ballyglass is a well-known and highly significant Early Neolithic site, comprising a large timber house and, immediately overlying this, a dual court tomb. It was excavated in 1969-1971 by Dr Seán Ó Nualláin and whilst some details, especially of the house, were published in a short report in 1972, the site was never fully published. Post-excavation work, coordinated by Professor Gabriel Cooney (UCD), was carried out in the early 2000s, providing full reports, illustrations and the majority of a final publication text. The 'Ballyglass Archiving and Publication Project' sought and received funding under the 2022 RIA Archaeology Legacy Grant Scheme to: 1) Prepare and list finds (artefacts and ecofacts) to enable their accession to the National Museum of Ireland; 2) Digitise site notebooks, slides and photographs; 3) Prepare paper and digital archive for accession to National Monuments Service'; 4) Edit and finalise the text of a site monograph for submission to a publisher.

7. Date the report was submitted: Dec 7, 2022

8. Please provide two appropriate images



9. Please outline the objectives of the project

The 'Ballyglass Publication and Archiving Project' had two central aims – 1) to bring this important site to full publication, and 2) to make the site archive accessible to future researchers. Our objectives in achieving this were thus to: 1) Prepare and list all finds to enable their accession to the National Museum of Ireland; 2) digitise site notebooks, slides and photographs; 3) prepare the paper and digital archive for accession to the National Monuments Service; and 4) edit and finalise the site monograph text and submit to a publisher.

10. Please describe the methodology used in conducting the research

The project team consisted of Jessica Smyth (PI), Conor McDermott, Graeme Warren, and Gabriel Cooney (all UCD School of Archaeology) and post-excavation specialist Ann Frykler-Hanbidge. Documentation and packing of the Ballyglass finds and paper archive were undertaken in liaison with the NMI and NMS, and with reference to guidance provided in the 'National Museum of Ireland: Advice Notes for Excavators' and 'Guidelines and Forms for the Transfer of Excavation Archives to National Monuments Service Archive'. Photographs and slides were digitised by Artur Sikora (darkroomservice.ie), a specialist digital media service. Site notebooks were scanned in-house at UCD by Ann Frykler-Hanbidge. The site monograph text and illustrations were finalised by the UCD team, drawing upon site notebooks and photographs for extra detail where needed. Specialist services by Sidestone Press publishers included lay-out, cover design, authors' corrections, technical and editorial advice and support; production of print files for Print-on-Demand Production and e-book PDF file.

11. Please outline the findings of your research and/or milestones achieved

Preparation and listing of finds for accession to NMI: Post-excavation specialist Ann Frykler-Hanbidge was hired in February 2022. Documentation work was mostly undertaken in Summer 2022, with a further period of database finalisation and packing completed in October 2022. Database sent to NMI in November 2022. Digitisation of site notebooks, slides and photographs: In May/June 2022 Artur Sikora (darkroomservice.ie) scanned 650 35mm slides, 900+ negatives and 135 photographs. Site notebooks were scanned by Ann Frykler-Hanbidge in UCD School of Archaeology. Preparation of paper and digital archive for accession to National Monuments Service: In June 2022, digital scans of photographs, slides and negatives were transferred to hard drive. Packing of the paper archive was completed in November 2022. Editing and finalising the text of a site monograph: Draft monograph text and images were submitted to Sidestone Press at the end of September 2022 for peer review. At the time of writing, both peer reviewers had recommended without reservation that the monograph be published; we await full reviewer reports from Sidestone (December 2022). A timeline for

submission of the revised manuscript has yet to be agreed, but publication will likely be Autumn 2023.

12. a) Please provide details of the dissemination of the outcomes from this project (inc. publications, presentations, outreach, media etc.) including details of any social media/web platforms used to publicise this project

The Ballyglass site monograph will be published in 2023, final date tbc. The volume (c. 55,000 words; 58 figures; 33 tables) will be immediately available fully Open Access, as eBook and Print-on-Demand hard copy.

b) No. of Academic Papers/articles published:

0

c) No. of Lectures given/outreach events involved in:

0

d) Media Coverage (article in local newspaper, feature on University website etc.):

None yet (see plans below)

e) How will you continue to communicate the results of your project and what are your publication plans?

As detailed above, the site monograph will be published as a fully Open Access book in 2023 with Sidestone Press. Sidestone Press is an archaeological publication company specialising in Open Access publication. In addition to producing hard copy printed books and e-books distributed to (digital) libraries and bookstores around the world, all of their books can be accessed freely on the Sidestone website. This means that everyone can access scientific research, including readers from parts of the world where access to good quality academic libraries is not guaranteed. Such a policy also benefits authors greatly as it increases the exposure of their work and the impact of their research.

In discussion with the NMS, we will explore depositing appropriate sections of the digital archive with the Digital Repository of Ireland (www.dri.ie)

In terms of public engagement, there are a number of events/promotional activity that could be planned to tie in with the publication of the site monograph. A book launch event at the Ceide Fields visitor centre (Summer 2023) would be a fitting tribute to Ó Nualláin's fieldwork in the area and could also be timed with the release of the site archive on the Digital Repository Ireland.

To engage a wider, more general readership, an Archaeology Ireland Heritage Guide on the Ballyglass excavations will be pursued with the current Archaeology Ireland editor Sharon Greene.

In February 2023, Jessica Smyth will be contributing to a short booklet 'Court and Tomb', an archaeological learning resource commissioned by Forestry and Land Scotland that focuses on the Clyde cairns of Scotland and the Court tombs of Ireland. Ballyglass will feature alongside case studies on Slewcairn, Giant's Graves and Gort na h'Ulaid (cairns on Scotland's national forest estate) together with contributions from Historic Environment Scotland (Cairnholy), the Northern Irish Heritage Service (Aghanaglack) and The Discovery Programme (Magheraghanrush). The booklet will set these prehistoric sites in their wider context and provide material for teachers and archaeological educators to enable outdoor archaeological learning.

16. What plans (if any) do you have to further your proposal/project?

Publication of the site monograph and accession of the archive with the relevant statutory bodies will see the completion of work on this Legacy Project.

17. For Archaeology Legacy Projects only: Please outline current plans to lead to completion of a final excavation report as per licence/consent and original grant condition:

As outlined above, the site monograph will be published as a fully Open Access book in 2023 with Sidestone Press and serves as the final excavation report.