Unfold Cork city's heritage through the pages of the Irish Historic Towns Atlas

The new historical atlas of Cork, which explores the city from its origins to the present, was launched today in City Hall (14 May 2024) by Cllr Kieran McCarthy, Lord Mayor of Cork City. Published by the Royal Irish Academy, the Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA) of Cork/Corcaigh is a weighty tome with historic maps, town plans and illustrations that trace the development of the city from 1545.

Cllr Kieran McCarthy stated that 'Cork City Council were very supportive of the project and were delighted to be a partner in producing what is the largest volume in the series yet! It is a tremendous publication which will no doubt deepen our understanding of the built heritage of our historic port city. The accompanying maps, produced in large scale, are a unique and important resource for those interested in the physical development of the city.'

Cllr McCarthy went on to congratulate Howard Clarke and Máire Ní Laoi 'for their continuous dedication and research, the editorial board of the IHTA and the cartographic team led by Sarah Gearty, for producing a significant volume which will have a lasting impact on future research and study of Cork city.'

Upon seeing the atlas earlier this month, an Tánaiste, Micheál Martin T.D. said:

'I am delighted to see Cork city added to the Royal Irish Academy’s Irish Historic Towns Atlas series, where it joins over 600 towns and cities across Europe that have been covered as part of what is an international initiative that highlights the importance of understanding of our urban heritage.

This wonderful collection of maps and images, presented alongside the remarkable detail of the accompanying text, offers a new way of accessing the history and geography of our city. The Irish Historic Towns Atlas builds on a rich tradition of mapping in Cork and is a valuable resource for the better understanding of the unique urban character and history of our city.'

Furthermore, Ciara Brett, City Archaeologist, Cork City Council remarked that 'Cork City Council were delighted to offer its financial support and partner with the Royal Irish Academy’s Irish Historic Towns Atlas to see the volume on Cork city to fruition. IHTA Cork/Corcaigh will contribute immensely to the work of Cork City Council and the wider community in Cork particularly those working in education, planning, architecture and conservation.'

She added that this partnership 'offered an ideal opportunity to deepen knowledge of the development of the Cork city in a collaborative way.'

From map and history enthusiasts to those who are just discovering the city, once opened, the Cork atlas promises a voyage of discovery. Priced at €50, the publication includes 40 loose sheets of maps and plates, 25 facsimiles of historic maps, 17 bespoke town plans and thematic maps, 61 topographical views and early photographs, a 40,000-word descriptive essay, and details of 13,000 sites from streets to buildings from over 600 various sources for Cork and urban history.

The Irish Historic Towns Atlas of Cork is published by the Royal Irish Academy in association with Cork City Council. Maps are produced in association with Taíte Éireann.

'...a serious publication of immense value to architects, planners and brave builders; but also a treasure-trove of luminous images for the general reader.'
- Thomas McCarthy, The Irish Times, 11 May 2024

'This is the kind of publication that makes a bookaholic purr.' ... 'to be treasured as an heirloom'
- John Kirkaldy, Books Ireland Magazine, May 2024

Cork/Corcaigh is available from bookshops nationwide today or can be ordered from ria.ie/cork.

ENDS
Press release from the Royal Irish Academy

Notes for Editors:

Cork/Corcaigh 9781802050028

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Máire Ní Laoi is a retired secondary school teacher who specialised in Irish and French. She grew up in Cork and has had a long family association with the city. She is a graduate of UCC and carried out much of the initial research for the Irish Historic Towns Atlas of Cork.

Editors: H.B. Clarke, Raymond Gillespie, Michael Potterton, Ruth McManus, Jonathan Jeffrey Wright

Consultant editor: Anngret Simms

Cartographic editor: Sarah Gearty

Editorial assistants: Jennifer Moore, Frank Cullen

Links to reviews:


Only superlatives will do for this outstanding production – John Kirkaldy, Books Ireland Magazine, 3 May 2024

Irish Historic Towns Atlas - IHTA

The Irish Historic Towns Atlas is a long-term research programme of the Royal Irish Academy. Since publication began in 1986, thirty atlases of Irish towns and cities, north and south, have been published. The atlases are produced following basic principles, making it possible to compare and contrast places with one another. Cork will join the cities of Dublin, Belfast, Galway and Limerick; and regional towns of Bandon and Youghal already covered in the Irish series; as well as over 600 European towns and cities produced as part of a wider International scheme.

See www.ihta.ie for more information.

About the Royal Irish Academy:

The Royal Irish Academy, founded in 1785, is Ireland’s leading body of experts supporting and promoting the sciences and humanities. As an all-island independent forum of peer-elected experts we recognise world-class researchers and champion Irish academic research.

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Press release from the Royal Irish Academy

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