Marshland to metropolitan city: exploring Cork through the Irish Historic Towns Atlas

Lapp’s Quay, Cork / 15 May 2024 / 9:00–17:30

This year’s annual IHTA seminar, hosted by Cork City Council, marks the launch of Irish Historic Towns Atlas no. 31 Cork/Corcaigh by H.B. Clarke, MRIA and Máire Ní Laoi, published by the Royal Irish Academy in May 2024. It will explore the city of Cork from its origins on a marshland site to the thriving metropolitan city we know today.

Building on a long tradition of map-making and local history, speakers will focus on recent research and new collections as presented in the Irish Historic Towns Atlas from various perspectives — archaeology, architecture, art history, cartography, historical geography and urban history — in seeking to understand and celebrate the unique sense of place and urban character of Cork city.

Programme overleaf
9.00–9.15  Registration
9.15–9.30  Opening & welcome: Lord Mayor Cllr Kieran McCarthy
9.30–9.45  Introduction: Sarah Gearty (Royal Irish Academy)
9.45–11:00  Session 1: Evolution and early development

Chair: Michael Potterton (Maynooth University)

— From marsh to early urban settlement
  Maurice F. Hurley (Consultant Archaeologist)
— Urban growth and expansion: the development of the town walls of Cork
  Ciara Brett (Cork City Council)
— Cork’s historic urban military landscapes
  Finola O’Kane (University College Dublin)

11.00–11.15  Tea/coffee break
11.15–12.30  Session 2: Collections

Chair: Sarah Gearty (Royal Irish Academy)

— Recent map collecting at University College Cork
  Crónan Ó Doibhlin (University College Cork Library)
— Cork in the visual arts, 1750–1950
  Michael Waldron (Crawford Art Gallery)
— Cork Wide Streets Commissioners maps, plans and drawings collection
  Brian McGee (Cork City and County Archives Service, Cork City Council)

12.30–13.30  Lunch

Demonstration of Digital Atlas of Cork/Corcaigh by Rachel Murphy (University of Limerick)

13.30–15.05  Session 3: Topographical themes and areas

Chair: David Dickson (formerly Trinity College, Dublin)

— Unveiling the past: investigating Cork convents through space and time
  Danielle O’Donovan (Independent) & Gillian O’Brien (Liverpool John Moores University)
— Aspects of printing and literature in Castle Street in the eighteenth century
  Michael Lenihan (Cork City Libraries)
— Changing places and naming changes: placenames and renaming in Cork city
  Tom Spalding (University College Cork)
— Mapping and remembering 150 years of Blackpool
  Maura Cronin (formerly Mary Immaculate College)

15.05–15.30  Tea/coffee break

15.30–16.45  Session 4: Built heritage

Chair: Ruth McManus (Dublin City University)

— Beautiful city by the Lee
  John Hegarty (Fourem Architects)
— Industry in Cork city, c. 1750–1930
  Colin Rynne (University College Cork)
— Civic and church building in Cork through the centuries
  Frank Keohane (Independent)

16.45  Session 5: Closing remarks

Chair: William Smyth (formerly University College Cork)
— Summation of the day
  Howard Clarke (formerly University College Dublin)

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