

GEORGE RUSSELL EASTER FESTIVAL

LURGAN & ARMAGH 1st-10th APRIL 2023





Welcome to the 2023 AE Festival

Welcome to the Annual George Russell AE Festival of History, Literature and Art (and of course fun!) which this year is our biggest yet. The Festival runs from the 1st to the 10th of April 2023 which covers most of the Easter holiday period. There's lots to choose from and lots of free-time in which to do it!

The events take place across a range of venues in Lurgan and Armagh. Activities include a Festival Opening Parade; expert talks and panel sessions; Tours - AE walking tours in Lurgan and Armagh; A new and exciting Literary Bus Tour; Exhibitions - 3 in total! An AE Book Launch and lots of poetry, music and song including the famous AE Festival 'Open Mic' Night; A unique musical collaboration between indigenous American and Traditional Irish musicians and a fabulous 'Flash Fiction' event.

Lots of history and culture with a little splash of local mysticism and mythology. In short, something for everyone. Although they are nearly all free, we expect that some of these events will sell out quickly so book early and reserve your place!



SATURDAY 1st APRIL, 2023

🕒 10.30am – 11.30am

FESTIVAL OPENING PARADE – LURGAN TOWN CENTRE



Bearing in mind that its April Fool's Day, we're kicking off the Festival with a Fun & Community Parade in the Centre of Lurgan featuring some 'Big Heads' (including George Russell) You'll see pupils and their parents from the AE art classes, lots of fancy dress, voluntary groups and local charities as well as plenty of music and razzamatazz! Come along and enjoy the Parade! Come and meet your neighbours and friends!

🕒 **PARADE STARTS: 10.30am**

📍 **VENUE:** Castle Lane Car Park, Lurgan.

🕒 1.45 – 4.00pm

FESTIVAL OPENING INTRODUCTION & DISCUSSION PANELS

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha, Armagh City (Free Admission)

🕒 1.45 – 2.00pm

OPENING WELCOME

Jim Conway - Chair Lurgan & North Armagh George Russell Festival Society
Dr Patrick O'Donnell – Festival Co-Chair, AE Scholar, Professor of English, Normandale Community College, Minnesota, USA

🕒 2.00 – 3.00pm

DISCUSSION PANEL 1 – AE – "INTO THE MYSTIC"

AE was the luminous centre of the Irish 'Cultural Revival'. Here we have an exploration of the beliefs of AE as influenced by Eastern Philosophies fused with Celtic Mysticism.

Dr Patrick O'Donnell, Professor of English, Normandale Community College Minnesota, USA
Dr Jenny Butler, Department of Study of Religions, University College Cork

🕒 3.00 – 4.00pm

DISCUSSION PANEL 2 – 'BEYOND THE PYSCHIE' AE AND OTHER LEADING WRITERS

AE was once described as 'the father of three generations of Irish writers' He enjoyed a great number of meaningful literary friendships. Here the panel looks at some of the writers AE mentored or befriended and what they thought of him.

Dr Patrick O'Donnell – James Stephens. Stephens was a popular writer, poet and close friend of AE and very grateful for the support AE gave him as a writer. His best known work was his novel 'The Crock of Gold'

Laura Ostertag – Simon Tery.

Simone Téry was a distinguished French journalist covering international affairs for most of the first half of the 20th century. She became a good friend of AE, meeting him in Dublin, London & in the US. Laura will speak about the AE Russell chapter in Simone Téry's book 'Ile des Bardes'

Jim Conway – Pamela Travers

Pamela or PL Travers was the Australian author of the Mary Poppins books and a very close friend of AE. He helped her with some of the ideas for Mary Poppins and took her on some of his painting trips to Donegal. She was with AE when he died.

Ryan Quinn – Lord Dunsany & JRR Tolkien

A brother of Horace Plunkett, Lord Dunsany was a big supporter of AE Russell and a very significant author in his own right particularly in the science fiction genre. He was an influence on J R R Tolkien, famous for 'Lord of the Rings'

🕒 4.30 – 5.30pm

FILM: IRISH PREMIERE

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha (Free Admission)

"Stories I didn't Know: Facing a Family History Built on Stolen Land"

The Irish premiere of a film showing how modern-day Minnesota was built on the stolen lands of the Indigenous American Communities.

Followed by Q & A with the film's Director, Rita Davern

🕒 8.00 – 10pm

FESTIVAL EVENING ENTERTAINMENT!

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha, Armagh City (Admission €7)

Flash Fiction

The Flash Fiction gang of writers have been asked to reflect on the AE Russell theme of "Lost Childhood" The 10 best monologue responses (short stories) will be performed. Expect a full range of emotions to be engaged in the various performances - some happy, some sad, bitter-sweet and perhaps even downright hilarious!

Armagh Rhymers

We round off Day 1 of the Festival with a short but unique contribution from some leading members of the world-famous Armagh Rhymers.

(And then there's still some time left in the evening to enjoy the bright lights of the City!)

SUNDAY, 2nd April 2023

🕒 10.00am - 2.45pm

ARMAGH, BANBRIDGE, CRAIGAVON LITERARY BUS TOUR

📍 **VENUE:** Bus starts from 'THE SHAMBLES', Armagh at 10.00am and returns for 2.45pm (Tour Tickets £12 includes light lunch)

The towns, villages and countryside around Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon have produced many writers of international repute and also enjoy many historic literary connections. In a comfortable bus journey complete with appropriate breaks and a light lunch we tour the area and explore all the associations with these literary figures.

A sample few are:

- John B Yeats (influential father of W B Yeats) – Tullylish
- John O'Connor (& John Montague) – Armagh City
- Dean Jonathan Swift – Armagh, Waringstown & Markethill
- George Russell – Lurgan & Armagh
- Gerard Manley Hopkins – Dromore
- Paul Muldoon – Collegeland
- John Hewitt – Kilmore
- Sinead Morrissey – Portadown
- Helen Waddell (and Joseph Scriven) – Banbridge

...and many more!

Tickets for this event are likely to go quickly – so book early! (Payment can be made on the day but names should be notified in advance to info@georgerussellfestival.org)

🕒 3.00 – 4.30pm

UNIQUE 'KINDRED SPIRITS' MUSIC WORKSHOP

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha (free admission)

Gaelic rapper Cu Chulainn and Dakhóta rapper Kitto in partnership with Traditional Arts Partnership from Mullaghbawn are hosting a world first Gaelic/Indigenous American rap workshop entitled Kindred Spirits using rhythm and melody.

The workshop is suitable for intermediate to advanced level bodhrán players, framedrum players and traditional musicians. There will be a full performance open to the public after the workshop.

The public are welcome at 5pm to hear the performance and to join in with the traditional Irish musical 'session' that follows.

🕒 5.00 – 6.30pm

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha (free admission)

'Kindred Spirits' WORLD PREMIERE

This unique cross-cultural musical collaboration will be played for the first time ever in front of a live audience.

After the 'Kindred Spirits' performance there will be a traditional Irish music 'session'. All welcome - musicians to join in or those who just want to appreciate and enjoy the music.

MONDAY, 3rd April 2023

🕒 10.00 – 12.00 noon

AE RUSSELL ARMAGH CITY WALKING TOUR



A chance to see all the sites associated with Russell in Armagh including the old Franciscan Friary, Tower Hill, the Russell family grave and much more.

The walk is relatively undemanding and will be assisted for a couple of the longer stretches by bus. The tour starts at the 'Shambles' at 10.00am. This event is free but must be booked in advance by email to info@georgerussellfestival.org

🕒 2.00 – 3.00pm

SPECIAL LIBRARY VISIT - THE AE RUSSELL COLLECTION

📍 **VENUE:** from 'the Shambles' to Armagh Cultural Heritage Library, Markethill Road (Admission Free)

Armagh boasts a number of famous libraries including the Cultural Heritage Library which has an important collection of Irish historical and cultural books. The library has an excellent collection of George Russell books and journals and has kindly agreed to assemble and display them for visitors to the 2023 AE Russell Festival. As transport will be provided from the 'Shambles' it is essential to book this tour in advance by emailing info@georgerussellfestival.org

🕒 7.00 – 9.00pm

AE RUSSELL EXHIBITION LAUNCH, TALK & PANEL SESSION

📍 **VENUE:** Armagh County Museum, the Mall (Admission Free)



This is a special event in the Festival Programme: Unlike the other exhibitions in the Festival, this EXHIBITION at the

County Museum (which will run from April 3rd to 27th) comprises the Museum's fine collection of AE's original art including paintings, sketches and various artefacts and personal possessions. Supplementing the Museum's collection there will be a number of artworks contributed by private collectors, including some beautiful paintings which have never been exhibited in public before.

After the EXHIBITION has been formally launched, there will be an expert talk entitled "Ireland's Strayed Angel - AE, Art and Irish America" by Dr Eimear O'Connor, Art Historian and currently Director of the Tyrone Guthrie Centre. After Eimear's talk there will be a **PANEL SESSION "Securing AE's Legacy and Place in History"** The panel will be discussing the revival of interest in AE Russell and the potential for future development.

Come along and listen and offer your own ideas!

Tuesday 4th April 2023

🕒 10.00 – 11.30am

AE' THEMED PAINTING & DRAWING WORKSHOP

📍 **VENUE:** 12 William Street, Lurgan (Free Admission)



Come along and learn from the 'AEON' artists group including Charlotte and Arlene who will show you how to paint and draw like AE himself. A fun session where you might just surprise yourself with your work!

🕒 11.30 – 12.30am

TALK: "AEIOU - GEORGE RUSSELL AND JAMES JOYCE"

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha (Free Admission)

George Russell was the first to publish James Joyce in a series of short stories in the 'Irish Homestead'. AE expert and psychologist John Donohoe shares his insights on the relationship between the two men and their different literary perspectives.

Tuesday 4th April 2023

🕒 2.00 – 3.30pm

PANEL SESSION 'AE UP TO THE STARS'

📍 **VENUE:** Aonach Mhacha Armagh (Free admission)

This is an enlightening panel discussion which combines a look at some of the Irish mythology which fascinated AE, including Newgrange, alongside the mythology and 'star knowledge' of indigenous Americans. AE was of course also known for his interest in the North American indigenous people.

The Session is led by:

Réamonn Ó Ciaráin, Author of

"Cúchulainn, Ulster's Greatest Hero"

and Reuben and Ramona Stately, Artists and indigenous American Cultural Project Leaders

🕒 5.00 – 6.00pm

TALK: "AE, PAMELA TRAVERS & MARY POPPINS"

📍 **VENUE:** Armagh City Library, Market Square Armagh. (Free admission)

George Russell was a very close friend of the Australian author Pamela Travers who wrote the 'Mary Poppins' books and who eventually sold the rights to Disney for the famous film. A fascinating tale of friendship and connections. The talk will be given by local historian and Chairman of the George Russell Society, Jim Conway.

🕒 6.30 – 7.15pm

TALK: 'THE ANCIENT PRACTICE OF FORAGING'

📍 **VENUE:** Lurgan Library (Free Admission)

Commentators have not only noted AE Russell's belief in Mother Earth and in the primacy of nature but also the calming and healing qualities that emanate from his poetry and writings. In this interesting talk local naturopath Paul May shares his insights into the many uses of the plant life that grows all around us.

🕒 7.30 – 8.30pm

TALK: 'THE GREAT PEOPLE OF LURGAN'

📍 **VENUE:** The Jethro Centre, Flush Place, Lurgan (Free Admission)

In addition to AE Russell, the town of Lurgan has produced many accomplished and distinguished people who have made their mark in the wider world. This talk, given by members of the Lurgan George Russell Society will highlight some of the names like James Logan, Jocelyn Bell Burnell, Thomas McCabe (and many more) and will discuss their achievements.

Lurgan has much to be proud of.

Wednesday 5th April 2023

🕒 6.30 – 8.00pm

TWO TALKS ABOUT TWO LEGENDS FROM ULSTER:

📍 **VENUE:** St Peter's GAA Club, North Street, Lurgan (Free admission)

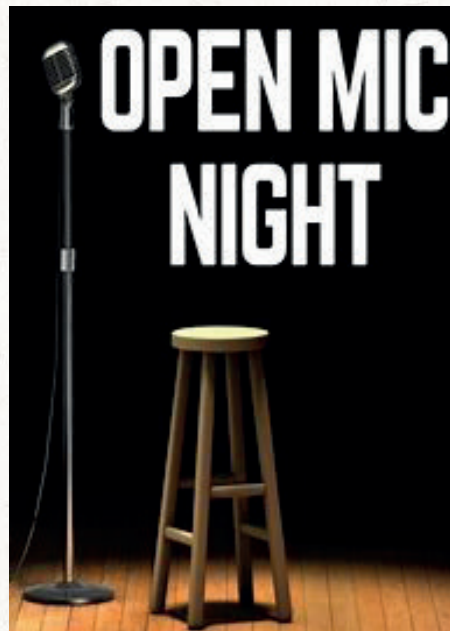
The first talk is '**Building Cooperation: Muintir na Tire and the influence of AE**' to be given by Dr Barry Sheppard a public historian and researcher whose doctoral research looks at the intellectual influences on Muintir na Tire's mission.

The second is '**Cúchulainn – Imperishable Reservoir of Inspiration**' to be delivered by Réamonn Ó Ciaráin, CEO of Gael Linn and expert on Cúchulainn.

🕒 8.00pm – LATE

FESTIVAL 'OPEN MIC' NIGHT

📍 **VENUE:** Vintage Bar (Free Admission)



An evening of Music, Poetry and Song where alongside some professional and semi-professional entertainers, anyone and everyone can participate and perform. A great night of fun and entertainment and everyone is welcome both performers and those who just want to relax in the audience.

Thursday 6th April 2023

🕒 11.00 – 12.30pm

'THE DRUIDS' WALK'

📍 **VENUE:** Oxford Island Discovery Centre, Lurgan (free event)

South Lough Neagh is a landscape steeped in history and mythology. The Oxford Island area is also a wonderful nature reserve. The Druids' Walk is a unique collaboration between local expert on Lough Neagh history, Jim Conway and naturopath and Ogham Folklorist Paul May.

Why not come along and enjoy a gentle scenic walk while learning about a fascinating place on Lurgan's doorstep?

🕒 4.30 – 5.30pm

TALK: "AE, PAMELA TRAVERS & MARY POPPINS"

📍 **VENUE:** Lurgan Library, Carnegie St, Lurgan. (Free admission)

George Russell was a very close friend of the Australian author Pamela Travers who wrote the timeless 'Mary Poppins' books and who eventually sold the rights to Disney for the famous film. A fascinating tale of friendship and connections. The talk will be given by local historian and Chairman of the George Russell Society, Jim Conway.

Monday 10th April, 2023

🕒 11.30 – 1.00pm

AE RUSSELL LURGAN HERITAGE WALKING TOUR

📍 **VENUE:** Meet at Brownlow House, Lurgan (Free event)

(Today is George Russell's Birthday – his 156th!)

Blow away those Easter cobwebs and join Jim Conway on a special heritage walk around Lurgan. See all the sights of the town and the places associated most with George Russell. See where Russell was born and baptised, and where he went to school. Also the place of his home in North Street and the library he frequented in the Mechanics Institute. The walk starts at the impressive Brownlow House overlooking the park where Russell had his very first mystical experiences. The walk is relaxed and not at all strenuous.

The walk ends at AE's birthplace at 12 William Street where walkers can attend his 156th birthday Party!

🕒 1.00 – 2.00pm

AE RUSSELL 156TH BIRTHDAY PARTY!

📍 **VENUE:** 12 William Street, Lurgan (Free event)

Join the group who have just finished the AE Heritage Walk in celebration of his 156th Birthday at the very place he was born. There'll be some music, refreshments and a big birthday cake – which will be cut by AE's closest living relative this side of the Atlantic – Arthur Russell from Nobber, County Meath. A slice for everyone!

A fun occasion among the fans and followers of George Russell.

FOLLOWED BY BOOK-LAUNCH

'AND THE OLD ENCHANTMENT LINGERS' NEW AE POETRY COLLECTION

This is a new collection of AE Russell's best poetry from the George Russell Society in Lurgan. Michael McKernan has put the anthology together along with some explanatory narrative.

A-Z of FESTIVAL speakers and performers

ARMAGH RHYMERS



The Armagh Rhymers are one of the most celebrated traditional music and theatre ensembles on the island of Ireland. Since being founded in the 1970s, they have delighted audiences in schools, festivals and communities throughout Ireland and around the world. Through music, storytelling and drama, they provide an experience that is both entertaining and educational. Their colourful costumes evoke a sense of tradition and history and encapsulate the spirit of the Wren boys and the ancient house visiting traditions of Ireland, where the kitchen floor became the stage. The Rhyming tradition is a celebration of the 'theatre of the people' and has inspired many poets.

DR JENNY BUTLER

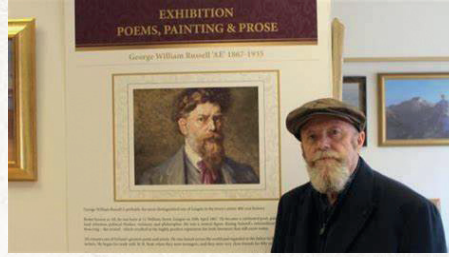


Dr Jenny Butler is a faculty member of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences at University College, Cork and sits on the College Executive Management Committee (CEMC) and on the University's Academic Council.

In the Study of Religions Department, she is Director of Graduate Studies and teaches on contemporary religions in Ireland, Western esotericism and new and emergent religious traditions, and has been a Lecturer at UCC since 2002. She is an internationally established researcher in the area of new religious movements and the study of folk religion, and is a leading scholar in her field, having conducted the first ever ethnographic study of Irish contemporary Paganism. She is an expert on the Celtic Mysticism of George Russell AE.

As an active scholar, she has given over 80 conference presentations and invited lectures in Ireland and internationally.

JIM CONWAY



Jim Conway is a well known and highly regarded historian and folklorist in the Lurgan area and is Chairman of the Lurgan & North Armagh George Russell Festival Society. A professionally qualified OCN tour-guide, Jim has been taking tours for many years and specialises in the Lurgan AE heritage walking tour as well as tours of Lurgan's historic Shankill and Dougher graveyards. Jim is also an expert on the mythology of the South Lough Neagh area and has given many tours and talks on the legend-rich Southern shore of the lough. Jim is a retired civil servant.

RITA DAVERN



Over the past 40 years, Rita Davern (originally Davoren) has travelled the Burren, birthplace of her grandmother's people in County Clare, Ireland. Her daily life, includes time searching for the people, places and stories her immigrant ancestors left behind. When drinking tea with Irish friends and relatives, the conversation often turns to those who stayed and those who left, as the devastation of colonization, hunger and emigration took its toll. Rita knows first-hand that, for U.S. people with European heritage, reconnecting to our homeland and our cultural history adds huge richness to our lives. Rita worked as a communication and leadership trainer for twenty years. When her adopted Korean son became ill, she learned, and now teaches, Parenting-by-Connection, an approach to parenting that builds close, healing relationships with children through play. *Stories I Didn't Know* is Rita's first film. She is currently working on a second film, *Burren Girl*, focused on the Ireland part of her family story.

JOHN DONOHOE



John Donohoe has taken a lifelong interest in George Russell AE and is one of the leading experts in the subject. A psychologist by profession John's initial interest in AE was aroused by the fact that here was a man who could combine a dreamy contemplative mind with a really efficient and focused practicality - very unusual in one person. John also runs a bookshop in Athlone (www.johnsbookshop.com) where he has among thousands of interesting books an unparalleled collection of all things AE Russell. He has been a frequent visitor to Northern Ireland and has given many lectures on the subject of AE. On many occasions John has also very generously made his unique AE collection available on display for the public to enjoy.

FLASH FICTION



Flash Fiction Armagh - led by Byddi Lee provides a platform for writers to experience immediate audience reaction to their work - a valuable resource for those who sit all day in a room by themselves writing. Their performances aim to entertain and provide an opportunity to mingle and make friends. Byddi Lee grew up in Armagh and moved to Belfast to study at Queen's University. She has since lived in South Africa, Canada, California and Paris before returning to live in her hometown, Armagh.

Byddi is a co-founder of the spoken word event Flash Fiction Armagh where the various writers give their unique take on any given theme.

PAUL MAY



Paul May is a Lurgan based naturopath and folklorist who is an expert on the myriad trees and vegetation of Lurgan Park (Northern Ireland's largest urban park)

Paul is also a qualified herbalist and an OCN-recognised tour guide. He has been delivering tours of the park in Lurgan and of the South Lough Neagh area for many years, focusing on the links between traditional trees and plant life and the mythology of the area.

He has also lectured on herbalism and traditional plant-based cures and is an expert on the ancient ogham folklore.

MICHAEL McKERNAN



Michael McKernan is a founder member of the George Russell Festival Society. He has recently curated a collection of AE Russell's best poetry and the resultant book is being launched at this year's Festival. Michael is also co-author of a previous book "George Russell AE - Lurgan & North Armagh"

Previously Michael ran an event management and publishing business before taking up a position as a Special Advisor in the Stormont devolved administration. He is currently a Director of electricity and gas infrastructure business Mutual Energy and a Director of the Integrated Education Fund (IEF).

RÉAMONN Ó CIARÁIN



Réamonn Ó Ciaráin is Chief Executive Officer with Gael Linn, formerly Director of Education. He is a highly respected gaelic scholar and expert on Irish mythology as well as being a very experienced cultural administrator.

He is author of three books on Cúchulainn; *Laoch na Laochra: Scéal Chúchulainn* (2015), *Cúchulainn, Ulster's Greatest Hero* (2017) and *Cú Uladh, Scéal Chúchulainn* (2018).

Réamonn is chairperson of Aonach Mhacha, the Irish language social enterprise behind the Irish language Cultural Centre in Armagh City which opened in March 2020 after a ten year Odyssey.

DR EIMEAR O' CONNOR



Eimear O'Connor is a leading expert on Irish Art and is currently director of the Tyrone Guthrie Artists' Centre in Newbliss County Monaghan, having taken time out from her work in the Humanities Institute at UCD. Eimear is an Honorary member of the Royal Hibernian Academy of Art and was previously a member of the Board of Directors of the Irish

Museum of Modern Art. She is a former member of the Board of Directors of The Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon where she was chair of the Policy and Strategy sub-committee.

Eimear is an authority on Irish artist Sean Keating whom she has written a book about and an expert on the art of AE Russell and the art of the period he worked in. She has written many research articles and delivered numerous conference papers in this subject area. Her most recent book is "Ireland, the United States and the Irish Diaspora" which includes significant new material on George Russell AE and his contribution to the appreciation of Irish art in the USA. In addition to her academic work Eimear offers a range of professional services to the Arts Sector.

DR PATRICK O'DONNELL



Dr. Patrick O'Donnell is Professor of English at Normandale Community College in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. He is also Director of Education at Celtic Junction Arts Center and an Irish Studies writer, editor, literary historian, and scholar who edits and writes for the quarterly online publication, Celtic Junction Arts Review. He is the founder/co-director of the annual Irish Arts Week in the city of St. Paul. He has taught two classes on A.E. Russell through Celtic Junction with students coming from across the U.S.A. from California, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and Minnesota. He is dedicated to resurfacing the international importance of A.E. for audiences outside Ireland in cooperation with the A.E. Russell groups in Ireland. Patrick is co-Chair of the 2023 AE Russell Festival. Indeed it was Patrick's idea to expand the AE Festival from Lurgan into Armagh this year.

LAURA OSTERTAG



Laura Ostertag is originally from Minnesota in the United States. She has been teaching French there for 20+ years for Saint Paul Public Schools. Summers off, travel grants, and a Masters in French have allowed her to travel to a variety of French speaking areas. Of partial Ulster heritage, she is interested in the connections between French and Irish cultures which are highlighted in the works by French journalist and friend of AE Russell Simone Téry, including, *En Irlande. De la guerre d'indépendance à la guerre civile (1914-1923)* (In Ireland. From the war of independence to the civil war (1914-1923)), 1923, and *L'île des bardes* (The island of poets), 1925. Laura will speak about the chapter on AE from Simone Téry's book *L'île des Bardes* which will be a unique new contribution to the 2023 Festival.

RYAN QUINN



Ryan Quinn is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, holding a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and Cultural Studies. While currently working in the field of logistics, Ryan enjoys his studies as an independent scholar into realms of literature such as fantasy, folklore, and myth, paying particular attention to how these stories remain relevant today. Coming from an Irish family background he is interested in the influence Irish and other Celtic stories have had on modern literature.

DR BARRY SHEPPARD



Barry Sheppard is an expert on the development of the Irish Cooperative movement an organisation spearheaded by AE Russell for much of his working life. Barry recently completed his PhD on the development of Muintir Na Tire, a national voluntary organisation committed to community development throughout Ireland. Barry is Head of Research at Lisburn Linen Industry Centre and is a frequent broadcaster on social history with Northern Vision TV in Belfast.

RAMONA AND REUBEN KITTO STATELY



Ramona Kitto Stately is a member of the Santee Sioux Dakhóta Nation. She has a BA in Dakota Art and Culture a minor in Business, and a Masters of Education from Augsburg University. After 15 years directing Indian Education in Minnesota, she is now Project Director for the We Are Still Here Minnesota, creating action for narrative change. Ramona is the mother of two children, an accomplished beadwork artist with moccasins on display in the Science Museum of Minnesota, and currently serves as the Chairperson of the Minnesota Indian Education Association since 2016. She is a part of the scholars' team with of the Minnesota Humanities Center's for Learning from Place: Bdote, and the author of Pazahiyawin's Story (pah-Zah-hee-yah-yay-ween's) of the Bdote as a reflection of inspiration from her

Great-Great Grandmother who survived the genocidal tactics during the US Dakota War.



Reuben Kitto Stately is a Native artist, composer and rapper who performs under the name Kitto. He is a graduate of Augsburg University with a BA in American Indian Studies. He is a lifelong Dakota Language learner and Beginning language teacher at Bdote Learning Center, and member of Minnesota Indian Education Board of Directors since 2019. Reuben has been one of the leads on Learning From Place: Bdote since 2018 and is passionate about the connections of language and place. As a young man, Reuben's identity is strong and his ability to walk in and out of two worlds looks effortless. Find Kitto's music on Soundcloud.

TRADITIONAL ARTS PARTNERSHIP (TAP)



TAP Arts from Mullaghbawn are teachers and performers of traditional Irish music and dance. They hold learning workshops for numerous traditional musical instruments and have built a strong reputation for their work. There is an emphasis on encouraging young people (although no-one is too old to get involved) and widespread participation is nurtured.

TAP Arts performances of traditional are also in great demand. As well as in Ireland the Group has been invited to perform in the United States and in a number of European countries. Although TAP's core offering is traditional, the Group are musically adventurous and always ready to fuse their music and dance with that of other traditions and genres.

FESTIVAL EVENTS – HOW TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

Nearly all of the AE Festival events are free and in most cases the only limitation on attendance is the capacity of the venue. Thus the way to be certain of a seat is simply to turn up in good time, maybe even a little early. However for a small number of events, where there are special requirements or which involve payment or the provision of transport, booking should be made in advance. These are:

Saturday 1st April FESTIVAL PARADE

All are very welcome but any voluntary community groups or anyone bringing a banner should register in advance with the Festival Committee by email to info@georgerussellfestival.org

Saturday 1st April ENTERTAINMENT

FLASH FICTION with Armagh Rhymers – Aonach Mhacha Armagh 8.00pm, admission £7. Although everyone can pay at the door, places will be reserved for anyone who emails the Festival office at info@georgerussellfestival.org

Sunday 2nd April ABC LITERARY BUS TOUR

From Armagh (Mall) £12. There are only a limited number of seats and they are expected to go quickly so booking is essential. Payment can be made on boarding the bus but names need to be provided in advance via georgerussellfestival.org or by email to info@georgerussellfestival.org.

Monday 3rd April 10.00am ARMAGH WALKING TOUR

As part of this (free) tour is by bus/ minibus it is necessary to know numbers in advance. Please register at info@georgerussellfestival.org

Monday 3rd April 2.00pm VISIT to ARMAGH HERITAGE LIBRARY

Free but numbers need to be known in advance for transport purposes. Register at info@georgerussellfestival.org

Tuesday 4th April 10.00am PAINTING & DRAWING WORKSHOP

(Free) 12 William Street Lurgan. Places are limited so advance booking at info@georgerussellfestival.org is essential.

EXHIBITIONS AT THE FESTIVAL

LURGAN EXHIBITION



There is an exhibition in 12 William Street Lurgan (AE's birthplace) which showcases Russell's many Lurgan and other local connections alongside a selection of his poetry and paintings. This exhibition will continue throughout the Festival and admission is free.

AONACH MHACHA EXHIBITION



A second exhibition is being staged in the Aonach Mhacha centre in Armagh City. The exhibition is "The AE Russell Story" and will include all aspects of his remarkable life as well as displays of his paintings and poems. The exhibition is being staged on the top floor of the Aonach building which also affords wonderful views across the city.

ARMAGH COUNTY MUSEUM EXHIBITION

The third exhibition and one of the highlights of the AE Festival is the exhibition taking place at Armagh County Museum. The Museum will be displaying its own unique collection of AE paintings and sketches – all original artwork – and some of AE's personal possessions. The Museum's exhibition will also feature a number of original artworks contributed from private collections. Some of these paintings have never been on public display before. The exhibition will be launched on the evening of Monday 3rd April with an accompanying lecture from leading art historian Dr Eimear O'Connor. The exhibition will run throughout the Festival until 27th of April and admission is free.

SPONSORS NOTE

The Festival organisers are very grateful to the sponsors who have supported the Festival financially and in other ways. In particular we thank the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the National Lottery Arts Fund. Without their assistance we would not have been able to stage such an ambitious Festival. Thanks are due also to Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council and to Gael Linn and Lurgan Credit Union. Also funded by the Lurgan and Armagh Townscape Heritage Schemes which are initiatives supported by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Lottery players through the National Lottery Heritage Fund. We are also very grateful to some private donors and others who provided assistance in kind.

PRINCIPAL FUNDER

