

# GRANGEGORMAN HISTORIES

A PUBLIC HISTORY PROJECT OF:

- Dublin City Council
- Grangegorman Development Agency
- Health Service Executive
- Local Communities
- National Archives of Ireland
- Royal Irish Academy
- TU Dublin

# GENESIS

- Father Piaras Ó Dúill and retired staff of St Brendan's Hospital
- National Archives of Ireland (especially Brian Donnelly)
- Health Service Executive stewardship of medical records
- Grangegorman Development Authority Master Plan and the GDA/DIT commitment more widely
- Local Communities' interest
- Dublin City Council: Historian-in-residence and Central Area Committee
- Professor Brendan Kelly's research
- Royal Irish Academy interest



[https://ggda.ie/assets/081103\\_Master\\_Print\\_Part7\\_small.pdf](https://ggda.ie/assets/081103_Master_Print_Part7_small.pdf)

### Conservation Strategy:

At the outset of the Masterplan preparation and following site visits and review of previously prepared reports, a number of conservation objectives were developed to provide the following Conservation Strategy for the Masterplan:

- To establish and articulate the historic—social, urban and architectural—values of Grangegorman and to ensure these are suitably incorporated within the overall Masterplan. As such, it is important to understand the historic significance of the site from the earliest development of the city and its environs, through to its more known and recent history of institution.
- To integrate the historic structures of significance within the Masterplan in a manner which ensures that they contribute to the generation of spaces and places—both in terms of physical layout and character.
- To identify uses for the historic buildings which are compatible with their spatial layout, which will ensure full and useful occupancy and which will allow this important heritage make a dynamic contribution to the cultural and functional character of this evolving urban quarter.
- To identify opportunities where history—in built and memory form—can influence the Masterplan in a way which enhances sense of place and, in so doing, enables distinctiveness of place and identity.
- To establish strategies for repair, intervention, adaptation and extension to the historic structures. These will include general and specific strategies and will also include approaches and objectives for upgrading of historic structures for increased thermal efficiency and other initiatives to achieve the Masterplan Brief objectives for greater energy efficiency and sustainable development.
- To ensure that the integration of historic and new built form and landscape achieves an overall coherence and integrity both at the level of the Masterplan and the individual buildings.

# GHWG MEMBERS

- Philip Cohen (Chair)
- Danny Connellan (HSE)
- Catriona Crowe (RIA)
- Stephanie Dickenson (Local Communities)
- Brian Donnelly (NAI)
- Charles Duggan (DCC)
- Noel Fitzpatrick / Mary Ann Bolger (TU Dublin)
- Ruth Hegarty (RIA)
- Brendan Kelly (Author)
- Mary Muldowney (DCC Historian-in-residence and Local Communities)
- Nora Rahill (GDA)
- Una Sugrue (GDA)

# COST, BENEFIT AND VALUE

## **Programme Cost: €30,000 over three years from each of GDA, TU Dublin and Dublin City Council**

- 10% set up costs
- 90% local programme spend

## **Programme Benefits:**

- Local Communities engagement, including schools
- Links with Cultural Institutions on the Northside of the city (e.g. National Museum, Collins' Barracks, Glasnevin Cemetery, Henrietta Street Museum)
- Introductory history of the site to 10,000 TU Dublin Staff and Students
- 620 online views for Culture Night 2020 event
- 1,868 online views for Dublin Festival of History 2020 event

## **Value: In-kind benefits from founding partners**

- Design, Website, Newsletters
- Access to high-profile contributors
- Support from National Archives (especially Brian Donnelly)
- Relationship with HSE

ACHIEVEMENTS  
TO DATE

Q3/2019–  
Q2/2020

- Seminar: ‘Historical mental health records: the ethics of access and preservation policies’
- Launch of *Grangegorman Histories Foundation Document*
  - People
  - Places
  - Practices
- Launch of [www.grangegormanhistories.ie](http://www.grangegormanhistories.ie)
- Grangegorman Histories e-newsletter

# Grangegorman Histories

*Grangegorman Histories* is a public history programme of research and shared discovery of the Grangegorman site and surrounding communities.

[Find out more about Grangegorman Histories](#)

## News and Events



### Uncovering Grangegorman Histories for Culture Night 2020

24 September 2020

Listen to the little-known story of the recovery and restoration of the records from the hospitals associated with the Grangegorman site. These records document the lives of the people and the practices employed there from 1814 onwards.

[GRANGEGORMAN HISTORIES](#)



### History in the News: Grangegorman Histories features in the latest History Ireland magazine

11 September 2020

A project designed to ensure that the history of the site is not forgotten, says *History Ireland* in its latest issue (September/October 2020).

[GRANGEGORMAN HISTORIES](#)



### Grangegorman Histories feature in GDA Summer Newsletter

05 August 2020

The launch of the Grangegorman Histories website and foundation document is a focal point of the Grangegorman Development Agency's (GDA) Summer Newsletter.

[GRANGEGORMAN HISTORIES](#)

Q3/2020—  
Q4/2020

### **Culture Night 2020 ‘Uncovering Grangegorman Histories’**

- Little-known story of the rescue and restoration of records now housed in the National Archives and what those records tell us.

### **Dublin Festival of History 2020 ‘Institutional experience of “Spanish” flu and COVID-19 in Ireland’**

- Referencing Grangegorman’s historical links to a series of epidemics, this discussion explored the unique role of the pandemics in revealing specific societal weaknesses, as evidenced by the current crisis.

### **TU Dublin online staff and student induction packs**

- <https://www.tudublin.ie/grangegorman/grangegorman-histories/>

Listen to the little-known story of the recovery and restoration of the records from the hospitals associated with the Grangegorman site. These records document the lives of the people and the practices employed there from 1814 onwards.

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## UNCOVERING GRANGEGORMAN HISTORIES



### Topics discussed

Why are these records so important? How were they recovered and restored? What do they tell us? Where were the records found, where are they located now and who can access them? And how can they challenge the historical stigma of mental illness and support the transformative process towards a progressive and compassionate approach to mental health and mental illness in Ireland in the future?

# DUBLIN FESTIVAL OF HISTORY 2020

## Institutional experience of the “Spanish” flu and COVID-19 in Ireland

05 October 2020



Like 0

Grangegorman Histories presented a fascinating discussion on institutional experiences of pandemics with Catriona Crowe, MRIA, Dr Cillian de Gascun, Dr Ida Milne, Professor Luke O'Neill, MRIA and Fintan O'Toole, MRIA. You can watch it here now.

# RESPONSES

## **Feedback:**

- *A very enjoyable format and wonderful to see the far-seeing work of Dick Bennet & Piaras O'Duill being recognised.*
- *I'm very grateful for both the scholarly perspective and the human empathy with which this research was approached and impressed with how the speakers presented their research and findings.*
- *Excellent event, great discussion from an expert panel. It has certainly ignited my interest in learning more about this impressive site in my neighbourhood.*
- *Despite missing the start due to the technical difficulties, I feel this was one of my favourite events of the Dublin Festival of History. I feel privileged to have attended this event featuring such an informed panel of excellent speakers.*
- *The discussion among those historically and currently educated made for a fascinating event. Thank you to the speakers for informing the past and current Health crises. It's helped with putting the current health crisis in perspective.*

## **Suggestions for future events/topics:**

- *The inclusion of Personal Narratives - perhaps shared by a person with lived experience would be great. Also, an insight into the lives of staff.*
- *More of the life stories/ profiles of patients and the work of the medics.*

# MEDIA ATTENTION

- Interview in July on Dublin City FM
- Feature in September issue of *History Ireland*
- Regular updates in the GDA Grangegorman Newsletter



## Grangegorman Histories: honouring the past

Published in [Issue 5 \(September/October 2020\)](#), [News](#), [Volume 28](#)

**A project designed to ensure that the history of the site is not forgotten.**

Grangegorman Histories is a public history project with the aim of uncovering, cataloguing and commemorating the eventful history of the Grangegorman area, situated between Phibsborough and Stoneybatter on Dublin's north side.

In 1773 the Dublin **House of Industry** was built in the south-east quarter of the site (roughly where the Legion of Mary hostel now stands). The House of Industry was an institution for the relief of the poor in the county of Dublin. It became the county workhouse and included sections used as asylums for the 'aged, infirm, homeless children' and others.

The **Richmond Lunatic Asylum** (now the 'Lower House') was one of the first public psychiatric hospitals in Ireland, built immediately to the west of the workhouse, and opened in 1814. It was named after the duke of Richmond, lord lieutenant of Ireland. The asylum catered for patients whose mental illnesses were considered treatable and, in the early years, a high quality of accommodation and environment was maintained. By the 1820s, however, changes in legislation led to overcrowding and to the reception of patients deemed by the courts of the time to be 'criminally insane'.



# UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

(Q1/2021)

# ‘CHANGE MINDS’ : ARCHIVES ART AND MENTAL HEALTH’

- Webinar: Friday 15 January at 6pm
- First Fortnight Art, Culture and Mental Health Festival
- Leaders and a participant of UK ‘Change Minds’ programme share feedback of its impact and legacy
- Potential to replicate this programme using the Grangegorman records housed in National Archives
- Booking available at <https://www.ria.ie/change-minds-archives-art-and-mental-health>



# FIRST FORTNIGHT

## THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Change Minds' Archives, Art  
and Mental Health

by Royal Irish Academy

[Follow](#)

Free



[Register](#)

Join us for a discussion exploring the impact, legacy and transformative potential of the UK 'Change Minds' project.

### About this Event

'[Change Minds](#)' is a transformative archival adventure for people from Norfolk in the UK, who live with mental health conditions and are on low incomes, carers, volunteers and staff. Researching two digitised 19th Century Norfolk County Asylum Case Books at Norfolk Record Office and Norwich Millennium Library, Change Minds engages local people and online visitors in the stories it reveals during a fascinating investigation into local heritage, mental health and identity.

### Date And Time

Fri, 15 January 2021

18:00 - 19:00 GMT

[Add to Calendar](#)

### Location

Online Event

# ORAL HISTORY PILOT PROJECT

- Led by Dr Mary Muldowney, Historian-in-Residence, DCC and Stoneybatter resident
- Pilot phase: Recollections and experiences of retired staff members from St Brendan's Hospital
- Interviewers: 6 volunteers, online training sessions concluding this week, recording devices purchased
- Consent: Developed a consent procedure for interviewees to be recorded and for recordings and transcripts to be publicly available under appropriate licence
- Interviewees: Invitations to issue in the new year (to coincide with the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations)
- Collection: Available on Grangegorman Histories website but housed with the Digital Repository Ireland (DRI) under Royal Irish Academy membership

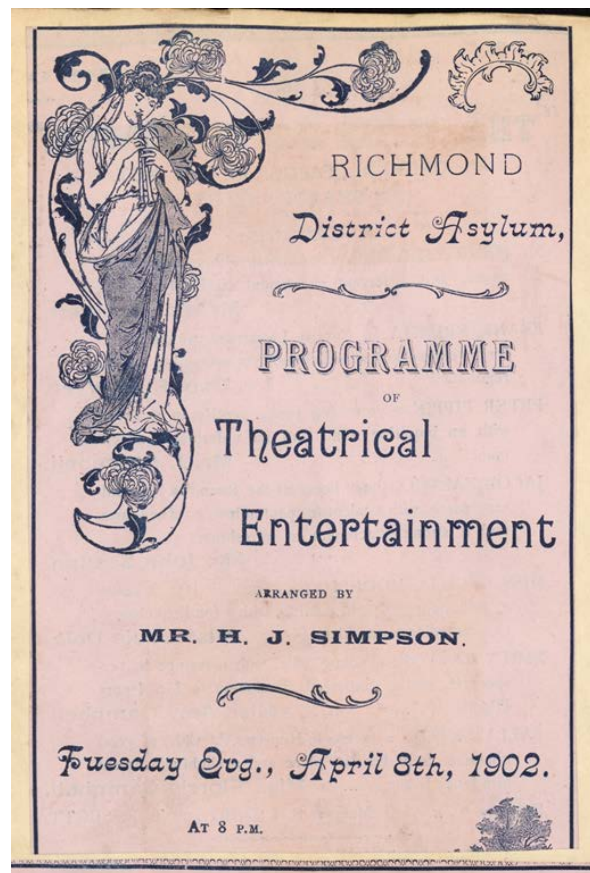


# COMMISSIONS

- Grangegorman Histories will commission works to fulfil its vision to stimulate awareness of the multi-faceted histories of the Grangegorman area and support its ambitious, wide-ranging and challenging programme that will benefit local, national and international stakeholders
- Committed to commission at least 9 historical reviews relating to the people, places and practices of Grangegorman
- Identify gaps in current published historical research of the area
- Pieces will be adapted for blogging and other uses
- Policy and procedures approved, commissioning to begin in early 2021

# LOWER HOUSE IMAGES

- Working with Design Team for Lower House on the display of a series of historical images throughout the building
- Giving all facility-users and visitors a sense of the history of the building and the site
- Launch in 2021



# SCHOOLS' ENGAGEMENT

- Reaching out to the 9 schools in the area to build relationships
- Exploring themes/key dates in school calendars
- Linking commissions with areas of interest expressed by the schools
- Delivery expected in Q3/4 2021

THANK  
YOU

- Questions and comments
- Contact [grangegormanhistories@ggda.ie](mailto:grangegormanhistories@ggda.ie)

