

Words on the Hill

Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre is on the site of the medieval capital of Ulster, the location where the O'Neills ruled as Gaelic chieftains from 1305. It is the place where the last of the O'Neill chieftains, Hugh O'Neill, ruled and led the Nine Years' War.

The Noble 99, led by Hugh O'Neill, gathered in Dungannon prior to the Flight of the Earls in 1607, and following their journey into exile in Rome, Arthur Chichester rebuilt the O'Neill castle in order to fashion his own military fort, referring to Dungannon as the "centre" of Ulster.

The Hill has been lived on, fought over, used as a place of burial. It has a story to tell.

Words on the Hill draws on the history and on the many stories associated with the people who lived on Hill of The O'Neill in Dungannon. For one week in October (that coincides with National Poetry Day) and one week in early February, the storyteller and writer Liz Weir holds a series of creative writing workshops with pupils from local schools. She uses the Hill and its many stories as the stimulus for writing.

When the pupils arrive they are given a guided tour of the exhibition on the Flight of the Earls and Plantation of Ulster by the Education Officer, and they are then taken to Hill of The O'Neill to examine the site of the O'Neill castle/Chichester fort.

During the second part of the morning, the visiting pupils take part in creative writing workshops with Liz in which they are encouraged to reflect on the history which they have encountered and to write creatively about it. Liz works with the pupils and passes on lots of ideas and tips for effective poetry writing.

The pupils complete their writing when they return to school. Their teachers then send the completed poems by email to the Education Officer peter.lant@midulstercouncil.org and these are featured in a compilation of children's writing that is published later in the year.

Learning Outcomes

Pupils will begin to understand the history associated with Hill of The O'Neill:

- By engaging with historical facts relating to the Flight of the Earls and Plantation of Ulster through a guided tour of the permanent exhibition and Hill of The O'Neill
- Taking part in a writing workshop with the writer and storyteller Liz Weir
- Writing poems based on the history and heritage of Hill of The O'Neill

Words on the Hill begins each morning at 10.00am and concludes at 12.30pm.

For more information about *Words on the Hill* contact the Education Officer, Peter Lant:

- Telephone: 028 8772 8600
- Email: peter.lant@midulstercouncil.org

For more information, see the **Learn** section of our website:

- www.hilloftheoneill.com/learn/



Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council