



The Cave Hill Campaigner

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Cave Hill during the Second World War

I can recall from my memories during the 1970's when we visited my grandmother in Shandarragh Park at the top of Cavehill Road, on Saturday evenings. In the summer months my father would take me for walks in the area and onto Cave Hill. At the age of ten or eleven I had this fascination with the Second World War and how it affected people at home here in Belfast. My father would tell me of how they sheltered under the dining room table in their Shandarragh home during The Blitz in 1941 and of how a small piece of shrapnel had come through their back door and embedded itself in a broom handle.



Shrapnel Fragment | *Parachute Fragment*

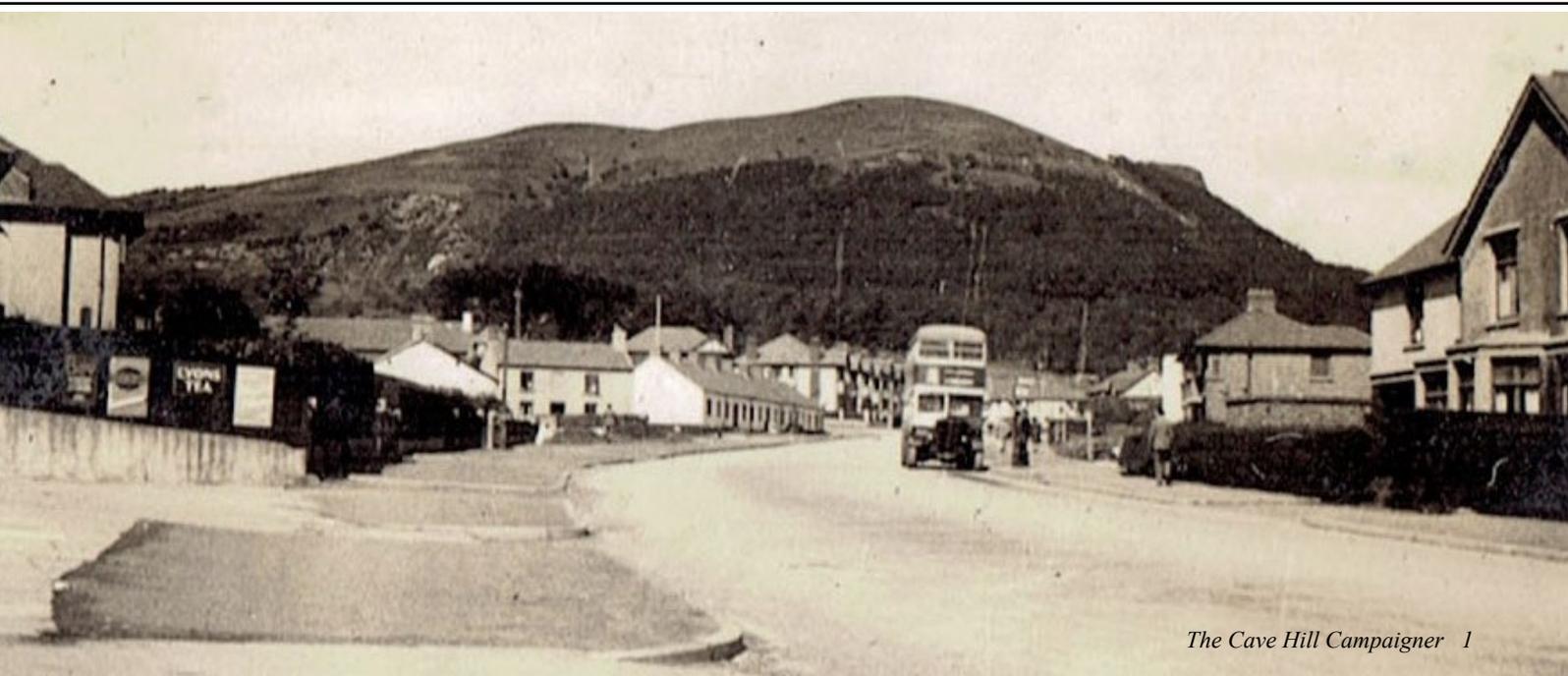
This was a piece of the casing from the bomb that demolished the two houses in Shandarragh Park. He showed me this which he had retained up to the 1970's along with a small piece of parachute which was recovered some days after the parachute mine bombs had come down in Sunningdale just a stone's throw

from Shandarragh and my father as a young boy had gone and gathered up this artefact.

We would often walk up Cave Hill, towards the quarries initially on the Upper Cavehill Road; my father would tell me about the army nissen huts at the bottom of Upper Cavehill Road and North Circular Road. These apparently were used to cook the food for the soldiers that were billeted in the half-built, and not quite completed, houses on the Upper Cavehill Road and he would also recall that in daylight hours on many an occasion, lorries would come up from, I can only assume, Victoria Barracks dropping twenty or thirty soldiers in the area and they would march in formation to the disused quarries at Cave Hill where range and firing practice would take place - this could be heard in my father's family home in Shandarragh Park. Two or three hours later they would march back down, climb into the lorries and head down Cavehill Road.

He also told me that during the second air raid in Belfast in 1941 one of the German bombs did not explode and had landed in the vicinity of the North Circular Road just where the hill now starts to climb up to the Boys Model School on the right hand side, the same side as the school. This bomb lay unexploded for one or two days, cordoned off and a local ARP Warden

Top of Cavehill Road - note cottages on left and air-raid shelter on right



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called Mr Doherty and a visiting soldier who was home on leave decided they would go and have a closer look and investigation of the bomb; unfortunately the bomb exploded killing both of them! My grandmother said that Mr Doherty had received his comeuppance as he had quite sternly told her she was letting a chink of light out through the blackout blind in her Shandarragh home some days earlier!

As we would continue our walking on the Upper Cavehill Road just where the houses ended we would veer off to the right which would bring us onto the main driveway of Belfast Castle and once again my father would point out the remains of training trenches that were dug and used by the local defence volunteers which was the military regiment before the Home Guard - we all know the fame of the Home Guard through the 1970's television series Dad's Army. These trenches remained up until the mid 1980's and may in fact still remain as this land is still undeveloped. As we would cross the woods and join the driveway to Belfast Castle we would continue walking in the direction of the main Castle building and again my father would tell me of how he could recall seeing the Shorts Sunderland Flying Boats taking off from Belfast Lough during the war, they would leave a wash behind them of white water which was almost two to three miles long and

then as we would approach Belfast Castle he would tell me it was an administration building for the Royal Navy during World War Two therefore totally inaccessible to the general public.

Belfast Castle in the 1970's was not used by Belfast Corporation and I can recall we used to peep through the downstairs windows, my father would tell me of the Saturday night dances that had taken place there after the war in the late 1940's to 1950's. We would then proceed in the direction of Hazelwood and come into sight of the Golf Course which was just beyond the pathway at the first caves and of course there was the trees to the right of that where my father had told me of an American B17 Bomber aircraft that had crashed and this was most interesting to a ten year old boy. That is another story which perhaps I can elaborate on in the future!!

As we approached the vacant Floral Hall building, my father told me of the specially constructed vehicles resembling buses (known as toast-racks) which operated from the Antrim Road up to the hall; Here is a photograph of my father's girlfriend (who was to become my mum) sitting on board one of these in 1952.



Nowadays I look at our adventures on Cave Hill with great fondness, how we would gather beech nuts and hazelnuts which we would bring home during the autumn months and in the summer months it was raspberries and blackberries. Another photograph I have included was taken outside their family home at Shandarragh with their Austin 10 car, new in 1946 which is still in existence and under the care of my uncle, Willy Montgomery.

The view on the next page shows Shandarragh Park on what looks like celebrations for V.E. Day with the



Pictured Above: Shandarragh Park during V.E. Day celebrations

flags across the road – note how the two houses that received the direct hit from the German bomb are totally gone and the site is clear, ready for rebuilding.

My father told me that the number 1 Cavehill Road bus terminated its route by reversing off Cavehill Road into Shandarragh Park before making its return trip to the city centre but unofficially some of the drivers would circuit North Circular Road and Shandarragh Park to avoid reversing. Once a double decker caught their V.E. Day flags wrecking their bedstead and the facing neighbours bedstead!

Alfie Montgomery

Pictured Right: Nissen huts on corner of Upper Cavehill Road



J.D. O'Boyle

M.V.B., M.R.C.V.S.

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Chairman's Report

I am pleased to report that generally it has been a good year for Cave Hill and for us. There have been no major threats to the mixed landscape we all love and appreciate. But there have been issues. There are issues with antisocial behaviour in evenings, particularly at the top of the Upper Cavehill Road and we have attended meetings with the residents, local politicians, council officials and police to offer our support. Earlier in the year, there was a resurgence in tension between some mountain bikers and some walkers; happily that episode passed after it was aired on our Facebook site.

Cave Hill is now featured in the Monuments and Buildings record of the Historic Environment Division of the Department for Communities; I refer to the white stone which is now recognised as an artefact connected with World War 2. Unfortunately, some idiot thought that any stone could be painted and there are now two other painted stones at McArt's Fort referencing a Syrian Christian sect - nothing at all to do with Cave Hill.

This brings me to an issue that does particularly concern me. Those painted stones at McArt's Fort are an example of gratuitous vandalism and is different from the careless and unthinking discarding of rubbish. It was deliberate and there have been other examples of deliberate considered vandalism. There have been three instances of metal theft this year from fixtures in the Park: two of the old Belfast Corporation boundary markers have had their plaques ripped off and the zinc information plaques on the viewpoint above the Wallace quarry have been removed. And some other vandal cut down the lone hawthorn tree beside McArt's Fort, beloved of so many photographers. I suppose that vandalism can be expected in a public space so close to housing areas but it is still dispiriting to see its results. Rubbish can always be lifted and we as a group do so, both collectively and individually. But trees and old historic plaques cannot be replaced. It would be easy to despair of doing anything to improve the area when such improvements get damaged or destroyed. But we owe it to the vast majority of users to try to make people more aware of the necessity of looking after open spaces and to try to find some way of preventing deliberate despoliation.

We ourselves maintained and indeed expanded the range of our activities during the year. We had eight guided Saturday morning walks and two late-evening walks with an average attendance overall of about 25. We facilitated 40 volunteers in September who spent a day filling many rubbish bags from all over the hill. Along with volunteers from the Belfast Hills Partnership, we helped clear ragwort off fields in Ballyaghagan at the back of the Hill and we also helped pull an invasive species - Himalayan Balsam - from an area below the Castle. We got pupils from Ben Madigan Prep

and Park Lodge to sow the wildflower seed to create a wildflower meadow along the wood edge below the Castle. Park Lodge also asked me to lead some walks on Cave Hill for their pupils and I was happy to do so. If only we all had the energy and enthusiasm of young children! We also planted hawthorn whips which will, in a few years, screen some of the ugly stone tracks left after Belfast City Council did a lot of drainage repair around the Castle in the late Summer.

Our butterfly survey for Butterfly Conservation Northern Ireland (B.C.N.I.) continued this year though the results showed that it was a bad year for most butterflies with numbers well down.

We have redesigned our membership leaflet this year and we have taken the opportunity to clarify ways of paying annual subscriptions by standing order. The more members who do this, the more secure our membership income.

It is good to report that, after a gap of many years, Belfast City Council has begun to encourage a grazing regime on the hill, mainly above the Wallace quarry. During the years of neglect, the area has developed a lot of gorse scrub and this is limiting its biodiversity and access. Such an area has been grazed for probably hundreds of years and, if it is to be maintained as mixed grassland and scrub, it needs regular grazing. I appreciate that cattle can appear intimidating but that is mainly due to people having grown accustomed to their absence. For many years, up to about 10 years ago there were herds of Moiley and Dexter cattle – rare breeds belonging to the zoo - grazing right across the hill and there was no complaint.

I am grateful to my fellow directors of Cave Hill Conservation Campaign for their commitment and concern throughout the year, to the employees of Belfast City Council with whom we engage and from whom we have always found wholehearted cooperation and to all the members of the Campaign for their keen support.

Cormac E Hamill

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The Thatched Cottage and the LP

Most people who lived in the Cavehill Road area of Belfast pre 1987 would remember the McAdam whitewashed cottage previously known as 'The Farm' in Sunningdale Park. For anyone who does not know, it was situated at the junction of Sunningdale Park and Sarajac Crescent.

I have been researching the history of the cottage and have found that it was a small farm on a much larger estate. The cottage passed through the hands of several members of the McAdam family before time and weather took its toll on the thatch and the cottage was demolished in August 1987.

This thatched cottage belonged to my late grandparents George and Matilda (Millie) McAdam whom I remember with lots of great memories. Attached to the cottage was a tiled/slatted cottage which shared part of the thatched roof – this house belonged to George and Millie's sister-in-law Bertha McAdam. Bertha was a well-known artist and one of her favourite subjects was the thatched cottage, I am lucky enough to have three of her oil paintings in my possession. I discovered at Bertha's funeral a few years ago that she also wrote poetry many of which were about her life

and her family.

I can tell many stories of my years visiting my grandparents and meeting my other relatives there. There were also the numerous visitors from around the world who had only a brief stay in Belfast and who wanted to visit a traditional Irish thatched cottage. We never knew when 'foreign' visitors would arrive with a Northern Irish tour guide. The front door lead into a very small porch and then there was another door to the living room. All the tour guides knew that if the front door was open it meant that my grandmother was at home and she would come out and tell the tourists all about the cottage.

The reason I am writing this article now is that recently I was going down memory lane through old photograph albums and pictures and discovered a framed record cover featuring the Cottage. I had known about the LP and remember the great excitement that it caused when my mum discovered it in a record shop many, many years ago. Around that time the front cover was 'cut to size' to fit a picture frame so a lot of the other details on the cover were no longer there.

When I asked my mum about it years ago she told



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afterwards.

In 2016 I decided that I would like to try and find out more about the LP so I googled the musicians names which I could see on the cropped LP cover to get more information. After several attempts I managed to locate a copy of the LP for sale in Connecticut. I contacted the seller who normally only sold items within the United States and explained why I was interested in purchasing it. After paying a small amount of additional postage it arrived and I was delighted to actually see the full cover for the first time.

I would be very interested to know if any of the readers of this article have any stories about the McAdam family or the Cottages, as I am still very interested in researching the people and the property. Contact can be made through the magazine on:

info@cavehillconservation.org

Ardene Smyth

me that we had visited my grandparents in June 1960, which we did at least once a week. A group of musicians arrived shortly afterwards to see if they could use the cottage for the cover of their latest LP/EP. They had been recording in a studio in Belfast and was looking for somewhere to feature on the cover and someone must have suggested the cottage. Not only did the musicians arrive but a local comedian called Tom Raymond was with them (he was the brother of comedienne Marjorie Rea).

They wanted the cover to feature some of the musicians on the LP. It shows Tom Raymond, George McAdam Jnr and Snr, Bertha McAdam, Alex McAdam (Tom & Bertha's daughter), myself (Ardene Armstrong) plus two of the musicians.

On the EP cover they wanted everyone to look as if they were having a party. So bottles of Black Label (empty I was told) were produced and placed on the table. On this cover were George McAdam Snr, Tom Raymond, Tom & Bertha McAdam, myself with my late brother Jim and Alex McAdam, again with the same two musicians who featured on the LP.

I was told that my grandparents' neighbours disapproved of what happened that day as in the 1960s you did not entertain, drink or party on a Sunday – many did not speak to my grandparents for a long time

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The Alien Is Here

Invasive species are, as a recent article in the magazine, *The Week* pointed out, “non-native plants, animals or pathogens which cause economic or ecological harm...,” and Japanese Knotweed has been described by the Environment Agency as, “indisputably the UK’s most aggressive, destructive and invasive plant.” And yes, Japanese Knotweed is on Cave Hill.

The article points out that the plant spreads rapidly, growing up to four inches a day in summer, and its stems, which resemble bamboo, can cover extensive areas while putting down roots that can penetrate tarmac. In summer, it produces white flowers, while in winter the dead canes are an obvious identifying feature.

It is by no means a recent arrival. The plant arrived in Kew Gardens in 1850, and like many other such specimens became very popular, and thus spread to other parts of Britain and eventually to Ireland. It came from the volcanic soil near the Japanese city of Nagasaki and the harsh circumstances of its origins are precisely what gives the plant its extraordinary resilience. It can, for instance, tolerate a wide range of temperatures and soil types. In its homeland the plant is controlled by the existence of 180 insects and 40 species of fungi, a form of natural protection denied to us.

As those who have experience of Japanese Knotweed can testify, it is very difficult to eradicate. If the stems are cut above ground, it re-grows vigorously; but digging out the roots is arduous. Disposing of it is also a problem, as it is classified as “*controlled waste*” and should be sent to a classified landfill. If control rather than eradication is the chosen option, a strong *glyphosate-based* weedkiller should be applied in May and reapplied in mid-summer and in September. Whichever method is preferred, it is advisable to leave it to professionals, and neither is cheap. To eradicate Japanese Knotweed from the area selected for London’s Olympic Park cost more than £70 million.

It is not an offence to have this on your land, but it is to plant it, or to cause it to grow in the wild. Any landowner who does not control it, could face a Species Control Order or a civil claim. Homeowners in the process of selling have a legal obligation to declare Knotweed, together with any attempts to deal with it. A recent report by BBC NI vividly described the difficulties a Belfast couple had in selling a property when Knotweed was growing on land adjacent to, but not under the control of the vendors. Mortgage providers demand insurance-backed guarantees of reputable treatment for properties offered for sale. And in case you wondered, it isn’t covered by normal household insurance.

Any good news? Well yes, but it’s qualified. The seeds of Japanese Knotweed are barren; but a very small section of the rhizome (the underground, horizontally growing stem) can sprout a new infestation.

For more information see:

www.nonnativespecies.org

Eddie McCamley

Pictured Below: The invasive Japanese Knotweed plant.



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Astronomy is Looking Up: The Skies over the Cave Hill

By day, the Cave Hill provides spectacular views across Belfast, Newtownabbey and County Down, and it's easy to lose yourself in the beauty of the trees, the wildflowers and the elusive rabbits and calling birds. But at night the hill provides an escape from the light pollution of Belfast, giving you a broad view of the night sky with its ever moving constellations, the wandering planets, and the monthly cycles of the Moon. Every clear night provides an opportunity to see something new, so why not take a look.

Winter 2017:

The early setting of the sun in Winter gives us our long nights, and plenty of opportunities to look up and discover new constellations in the early evenings. Winter is a good time to discover Orion, the hunter who marches across the southern sky nightly while followed by his two faithful dogs, Canis Major (the big dog) and Canis Minor (the little dog). Looking towards the north you can find the Big Dipper or the Plough, the

frying pan shape that has pointed many generations of early explorers North and helped them find their way home with stories of strange new lands and interesting creatures.

Spring 2017:

On April 17th, Jupiter is at its closest point to Earth during 2017. Now is a good time to dust off your binoculars or telescope and have a look. Due to its proximity, Jupiter will appear larger than at any other time of the year, and with a small telescope you should be able to make out some of the bands across the planet. Even with a small pair of binoculars you can make out the four Galilean Moons orbiting Jupiter. These are the four closest and largest moons to Jupiter, which were discovered by Galileo in 1610 and helped prove his theory that the Solar System orbits the Sun and not the Earth. These moons travel so quickly that you can follow their movements night after night, assuming of course that the weather stays clear.

Cavehill By Night, picture by Donal McDaniel



Summer 2017:

The days are now longer, but on the night of the 12th August the heavens put on a show that's well worth staying up for. This night is the peak of the Perseid meteor shower which lasts between July 17th to August 24th. On the night of the 12th, you can expect up to 60 meteors per hour shooting across the sky. The meteors are created when the Earth passes through the orbit of comet Swift-Tuttle, which is littered with bits of rock and ice left behind by the comet. These rocks and ice burn up as they hit the Earth's atmosphere, leading to a bright flash of light in the sky. The brightest ones can last for several seconds and stream across half the sky! So grab a blanket, a jumper and a flask of tea, and enjoy the show.

Autumn 2017:

In December, the heavens give us a double whammy. On the 3rd is a supermoon, which is the name given to the Moon when it's at its closest approach to the Earth. A supermoon appears slightly larger and brighter than the normal full moon, an effect which is exaggerated when the Moon is low in the sky and there is something in the foreground as a comparison.

The second event of the month is the Geminid meteor shower between the 7th-17th. The meteors peak on the

night of the 13th December, with an expected peak of around 120 meteors per hour. So, if you see bright flashes in the sky on the way home from a Christmas party, it's nothing to worry about.

What's that object?

- Does it look like an orange glow low in the sky?
It's the light pollution from streetlights and car headlights.
- Does it look like a star, but it's brighter and doesn't twinkle?
It's a planet.
- Does it have a tail?
It's a comet.
- Does it look like a star that's moving slowly across the sky?
It's a satellite, such as the International Space Station.
- Does it flash across the sky?
It's a meteor, also known as a shooting star.
- Does it have move slowly and have flashing red, green and white lights?
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Evelyn Johnston

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McArt's Fort: what's in a name?

Visible from almost anywhere in the city, the Cave Hill and McArt's Fort sit prominently on the northern skyline but little is known about McArt's - why, when and by whom it was named is most uncertain.

The Cave Hill was known originally as Ben Madigan and as Beinn-Uamha (the hill of the cave) in the Annals of the Four Masters where it was reported in 1468 that "*The son of Robert Savage, Lord of Leathcathail, was killed and the English of Leathcathail overthrown by Con, son of Aodh Buidhe O'Neill, at Beinn-Uamha.*" In July 1556, when the Lord Deputy, the Earl of Sussex, passed through Belfast, his secretary reported that they "*camped underneath Banne Vadegane*". It was named *Benmadiane* in a chart of Belfast Lough drawn about 1570 and as *Knocke Bennlegan* in a map drawn in 1603 by the Elizabethan cartographer Richard Bartlett.

The promontory fort now known as McArt's (possibly an Iron-age site though not yet excavated) was named *Dunvallegan* (the fort of Madigan) in an Inquisition held by English officials in Belfast on 30 August 1621. *Dunvallegan* was not listed when land-grants made to Sir Arthur Chichester were reconfirmed in 1669 and the name may then have been obsolete. When the names Ben Madigan and *Dunvallegan* were replaced by Cave Hill and McArt's Fort is unknown but the older names were no longer in common use by the mid-18th century.

The Belfast Newsletter (first published in 1737) has two references to McArt's in the 18th century referring to it in November 1794 as *Macarty's Fort* in relation to barometrical readings taken there and to *Macart's Fort* in October 1785 when reporting the accidental death (or suicide) of John Allison, a farmer from Templepatrick. McArt's also features in the autobiography of Wolfe Tone who was in Belfast from 13 May until 13 June 1795. He wrote: "*I remember particularly two days that we passed on Cave Hill. On the first, Russell, Neilson, Simms, McCracken and one or two more of us, on the summit of McArt's Fort, took a solemn obligation ... never to desist in our efforts until we had subverted the authority of England over our country and asserted her independence.*"

Associating the hill with Napoleon also dates from that time. From 1789 political radicals in Belfast were acutely aware of the developing French Revolution and interested in all news from France and some saw in the hill a resemblance to the profile of Napoleon Bonaparte. Alice Milligan, writing a century later in 1898, noted in her **Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone** that "*To this day ... the people of Belfast ... call it Napoleon's Face.*"

Cave Hill and McArt's are mentioned by various 19th

century authors. **Mr and Mrs Hall's Tour of Ireland** (1840) refers to the "*strikingly beautiful view ... from McArt's Fort on the summit of Cave Hill*". But few offer an explanation of how McArt's got its name. A Mackay states in **The History of the Town of Belfast** (1823) that "*There is, however, neither record or tradition to inform us when or by who it was made.*" He suggested that it was named after an "*Irish chieftain of the name of Mac Art*". He also reported disapprovingly that "*a certain adventurer*" seeking "*hidden treasure*" had dug out the large depression that can still be seen on McArt's.

Others were more precise. JB Doyle, in his **Tour in Ulster – A Handbook of the Antiquities and Scenery of the North of Ireland** (Dublin 1854) noted that Cave Hill's "*ancient name was Ben Madigan but that is entirely superseded by its more modern name.*" and stated that the fort "*was the stronghold of Brian Mac Art and his sept, which was so cruelly exterminated in the reign of Elizabeth by the Deputy Mountjoy.*" He was supported in this by William McComb in his **Guide to Belfast, the Giant's Causeway and the adjoining districts in the Counties of Antrim and Down** (Belfast 1861). McComb reported that McArt's Fort was "*one of the last strongholds of Brian Mac Art who, with his sept, was exterminated by Lord Deputy Mountjoy in the reign of Elizabeth.*" He also stated that on McArt's there was a "*Giant's Chair ... on one side of the precipice ... on the verge*".

Who then was Brian McArt and why was the fort on Cave Hill named after him?

Brian McArt McBaron O'Neill, one of the leaders of the northern Irish during the Nine Years War from 1594 to 1603, was the son of Art O'Neill from north Armagh and the nephew of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, the most formidable of Elizabeth I's enemies in Ireland. Brian operated mostly in south Antrim and north Down and English officers in Carrickfergus complained bitterly about his activities. Mountjoy, Lord Deputy (later Lord Lieutenant) of Ireland (1600 to 1604) also named him in his reports to England. Doyle and McComb
w e r e

mistaken, however, about Brian's death. It was caused not by Mountjoy but by Arthur Chichester, Governor of Carrickfergus Castle and later also Lord Deputy of Ireland.

In March 1594, Brian, Tyrone's principal lieutenant in the territory of the Clandeboye O'Neill (south Antrim and north Down) attacked the English of Carrickfergus and those Anglo-Irish and Gaelic families that refused to join the war against the Crown. Captain Charles Eggerton, Constable of Carrickfergus, reported to Dublin that Brian with some 400 soldiers had killed a leader of the Magees for refusing to support Tyrone and had taken "*Marshal Bagenall's stud over the Bann, since which time they have threatened the burning of the town*" of Carrickfergus. Eggerton warned that the townspeople were in "*extreme fear*." Brian followed this up with a devastating raid into south Down and Bagenal reported to Dublin "*All the Irishry, have combined with the Earl (of Tyrone) but not for any love they bear him.*"

In July, Eggerton reported that "*Brian M'Arte M'Barron ... the Earl of Tirone's base brother's bastard son, and both father and son of great account with the Earl ... doth lie strongly here in Killyleag (Killyleagh) not offering any hurt to us in these parts and doth graze his creaghts (cattle and horse herds) on the plains.*"

Brian did not stay inactive for long. In October 1594, he "*burned eleven towns in the Ardes and taken great prey.*" Almost certainly, this attack was aimed at destroying the residual traces of Sir Thomas Smith's ill-fated plantation of the Ards Peninsula in 1572 and pressurising those Irish and Anglo-Irish families living there into supporting Tyrone's war against England. In August 1596, Brian overran Lecale and in September Eggerton reported that he was once again threatening Carrickfergus.

In 1597, Brian and his Clandeboye allies captured Belfast Castle and much of the surrounding territory. In May 1597, it was reported from Carrickfergus that Tyrone had burnt "*24 townlands (in Islandmagee)*

keeping in his company Brian M'Art, the Earl's brother's son, and Shane McBryan." On 27 June, Captain Anthony Deering wrote angrily to Lord Burghley (Elizabeth's chief minister in London) that the English were under severe pressure. He reported that "*Shane McBryn (chief of the Clandeboye O'Neill in south Antrim) and Bryan McCartt ... camp at Carnmony in the teeth of our garrison ... now 1000 men can scarcely march two miles.*"

On 16 September 1597, the Governor of Carrickfergus, Sir John Chichester (brother to Arthur) wrote to Burghley describing "*Bryan McArtt ... and Shane McBryan (as) the principall men of action in these parts.*" He also reported, prematurely, that he had defeated Brian, Shane and their followers "*21 of whose heads I afterwards sent to the Lord Deputy.*" Little did Sir John know that just two months later he would be killed near Carrickfergus and his head would be sent as a trophy to Hugh O'Neill in Tyrone.

Brian also fought at the Ford of the Biscuits near Enniskillen in August 1594 and at the battle of the Yellow Ford near Armagh in August 1598, both significant Irish victories. But from 1598 he was mostly in south Antrim and north Down fighting against his implacable enemy Sir Arthur Chichester, Governor of Carrickfergus. Chichester almost managed to kill him in April 1601 when, according to Chichester, Brian "*In our last skirmish ... saved himself by his legs and his bogs, leaving his horse behind him.*"

In July 1601, Chichester suggested that the Irish could be defeated if "*I could free it (the countryside near Belfast) from the incursions of Brian McArt, who keeping himself within one of the strongest fastnages (fastnesses) of the north ... kills and spoils such as lie with careless watch.*" Chichester raged that he could not get easily to Brian. In May 1601, he had complained bitterly that Brian "*keeps himself within the fastnages of Killultagh and Kilwarin, and I cannot harm him as I desire.*"

Was the fort on

Ben Madigan one of these *fastnages*? Brian was active in the area and had camped at Carnmoney in the summer of 1597. It would have made tactical and strategic sense to have taken advantage of the woods near Belfast and the fort on Ben Madigan to advance his campaign of guerrilla warfare against the Chichester brothers and the English garrisons at Belfast and Carrickfergus.

The Clandeboye fortress at Castlereagh fell to Chichester on 7 July 1601 and two weeks later he reported to London that he had driven Brian “*over the Bann, with all his goods and people.*” By then the war was being waged in a merciless manner. A policy of “*scorched earth*” and what would now be termed ethnic cleansing swept the land of people, crops and livestock.

In October 1601, the Spanish arrived at Kinsale and Hugh O’Neill went to meet them. Brian stayed in Ulster and a report in the State Papers stated that Tyrone’s “*kinsman Bryan Mac Art is chosen principal actor in the Clandeboyes to molest the few loyal subjects and good garrisons there, to stir others to revolt the better to entangle Sir Arthur Chichester, and prevent him from enterprises in Tyrone in the Earl’s absence.*”

The Irish were defeated at Kinsale on Christmas Eve 1601 and the war entered its most brutal phase as Mountjoy sought the surrender of Hugh O’Neill by destroying his crops, livestock, property and people. McArt fought on in the east. On 5 March 1602, Sir Ralph Lane reported to Burghley that Carrickfergus was still being defended “*against the strength of the archtraitor’s rebel followers, namely Brian M’Art nephew to Tyrone, and his lieutenant-general of the Clandeboyes.*” But resistance could not last. In July 1602, according to Sir Thomas Phillips, a captain in Carrickfergus, Brian had only 400 infantry and Tyrone 900. Phillips reported that “*This is all their strength.*” By the winter of 1602-1603, Brian was back in Tyrone. A report to Burghley stated that “*Only Brian has stayed with Tyrone. His father and brothers have come in.*” Three of Brian’s brothers had been killed in the war, two at the Yellow Ford and another, Shane, by Chichester’s soldiers. On 26 February 1602, Lord Mountjoy reported scornfully that “*In Ulster none but Tyrone and Brian Mac Art, who was never Lord of any country, and now with a body of loose men and some creaghts continue in (the forest of) Glancomkynes*” But Brian held on. Fynes Moryson, Mountjoy’s personal secretary, wrote that “*Brian Mac Art will nourish the War as long as (he sees) any possibility to subsist ...*”

The war ended in March 1603. Brian was pardoned but Chichester did not forgive or forget. Brian killed a man in what he claimed was self-defence in an affray at a family celebration in south Armagh in 1607. Sir Arthur, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, had him arrested

and brought to Dublin to face a charge of manslaughter. Despite Tyrone’s offer of a large ransom to save his nephew from the rope, McArt was found guilty and was hanged in November 1607.

Hugh O’Neill fled to Europe in September 1607 to escape Chichester and others who were determined to bring him down. He wrote to King James on 10 November protesting that Brian’s “*death ... was very much desired by the Lord Deputy.*” It was all too late. John Frewin, a priest from County Down who had previously worked for McArt, returned to Ireland in March 1608. Much had changed. He wrote dispiritedly “*Tyrone departed, and Brian, his old master, executed...*”

Mountjoy Castle, a small campaign fort built in 1602 on the western shore of Lough Neagh, recalls the part played in the war by Lord Mountjoy while Chichester Street and Arthur Square in Belfast are named for Sir Arthur. Ironically, McArt’s Fort, one of the most dramatic locations in Ulster, is named for their defeated opponent and looks down not only on Belfast where Chichester built his own castle in 1611 but also on Carrickfergus from where he so ruthlessly and successfully prosecuted the war against Brian and Hugh O’Neill.

The name McArt’s was applied to the fort at some point between 1621 and 1785 but by whom is unknown. Did residual elements of the native Irish who remained in the area following the Plantation of Ulster name the hill fort for McArt or did the name originate with the new English and Scottish inhabitants of Belfast? Both groups would have been aware of the role played by McArt in the area during the Nine Years War though each would have had their own and different reasons for naming the promontory fort for him.

The dangerous days of the 1590s and early 1600s are recoverable only in the histories and state papers of the time but McArt’s Fort remains a visible link with those years and a memorial not only to Brian McArt but also to the others, Irish and English, who fought and struggled in the killing fields of east Ulster.

Daniel McCall



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Walk on Belfast

You the reader may well ask ‘What has the above title got to do with Cave Hill?’ Quite a lot, I can assure you! It is, in fact the title of a very moving piece of music composed on the very slopes of Cave Hill by a very uniquely talented lady named Janet Harbison, composer, conductor, music teacher and harpist. I feel it only right to apply some of her background before the rest of my story unfolds.



Janet Harbison

She has many credits to her name, too numerous to fit into the allocated space within this magazine. A few to mention include, she founded, taught and directed *The Belfast Harp Orchestra*, which then developed into a world touring stage production featuring up to 24 harpers, musicians and dancers from both communities in the province. They won numerous awards and accolades including one with *The Chieftains*, which won the Grammy award for Best Folk Music Album in 1993. Many harp schools were established by this lady throughout the province which continue to flourish today, now managed and directed by former students. During her eighteen years here (1984-2002), Janet spent the first two years as a Research Fellow at The Institute of Irish Studies in Queens University. She then spent the next eight years as Curator of Music with the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum working to the policy: *Education through Mutual Understanding* (essentially seeking Peace and Reconciliation through music). After her spell as Curator, Janet founded and then served as CEO of the *Harp Foundation Ireland Ltd* (a charity) for the next eight years. She and her Orchestra have received a number of prestigious awards for such brave work. Within her very busy schedule, she made time

to bring her music of the harp to the very bedside of patients in the Northern Ireland Hospice for whom she recorded and dedicated her CD *Prayer*. This project was inspired by one of the Hospice patients named Albert who left a legacy for her to make a recording of the hymn *Nearer My God*. One can only but try to imagine the peace and tranquillity such a devoted action delivered to each individual after his passing. In 1995 she composed *Bright New Morning* in celebration of peace in Northern Ireland and also to commemorate the visit of U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Janet moved to Limerick in 2002 and established The Irish Harp Centre – a place for rehearsing her now professional touring group, The Irish Harp Orchestra, as well as teaching, composing and publishing. This now channels me through to how her composition *Walk on Belfast* came into existence.

On the night of Saturday 24th October 2015 I attended a concert in St Patrick’s Church, Donegall Street. It was given by The Irish Harp Orchestra, conducted and directed by Janet Harbison. Admission fee was voluntary with a significant proportion of donations going towards the Church Restoration Fund. The presentation, along with numerous harpists, included various musicians, two solo singers, the St. Patrick’s Parish Choir and Children’s Choir and a solo piper that Janet brought from Limerick with her for the concert... Just imagine my surprise when she announced the third piece of music *Walk on Belfast*. I was so moved... in fact I felt riveted to the seat! This was not entirely due to my affinity with Belfast and Cave Hill, but the simple fact I made a discovery in an area at the foot of the Hill that day. For several weeks I’d been on a quest to locate the steps leading down to the water originating from a spring well which for many years was the only source of water available to Cavehill Cottage, (another story for another day!). The only clue I had, was that it was accessed by a set of steps in the vicinity of the gravel path, (known as *The Green Road* in bygone years), which today runs up the right hand side of the Cottage. I read this in an article by Alan Caulfield, titled *Your Place and Mine* (2008). His father John (Jack) was born in Cavehill Cottage. Unfortunately the years have taken their toll on the steps which now reside in a dilapidated state though still remain vaguely recognisable.

Before the concert concluded, I felt strongly compelled to approach Janet to discover the origin of *Walk on Belfast*. I must admit that, at this time, I was not aware of the many numerous awards and accolades she had to her credit.

I felt privileged to have this kind-hearted considerate and talented lady listen so intensely to my story of the

day. She in return shared some of her experiences and past history which animated the inspiration behind composing 'Walk on Belfast'. As an accomplished hill walker (amongst other sports) she often spent Sunday mornings walking on Cave Hill. On one particular walk in 1997 whilst the political unrest again emerged after the short peace of 1995-97, she coined the following words, *'This piece was composed while walking in the magnificent woodland of Cave Hill overlooking the city of Belfast at dawn on a sunny Sunday morning and I was particularly struck by the beauty of the land and the contrasting grief in its heartache'*.

From that moment, I felt strongly that her story should be made known by way of printing these facts in our magazine. I asked her permission to do so which she so graciously gave. Furthermore she promised to send me a copy of 'Janet Harbison – The Irish Harp Orchestra'. 'The Belfast years 1992 – 2002' which contained my favourite piece 'Walk on Belfast'.

You may ask why I've included so much information about Jane Harbison. Impressively, this is merely the tip of the iceberg. A vast surprising array I assure you, including, how her roots are embedded in Ulster. Her grandfather, T.J. Harbison was town solicitor for Cookstown and prominent figure in the government of 1922 -1930. Janet was the first of her family to be born outside of Ulster in Dublin 1955.

The answer to the question *What has the above title got to do with Cave Hill?*, is that on the night of 24 October 2015, I gave my word to this lady that I would grace the readers of The Cave Hill Campaigner with the knowledge of Janet Harbison's passion and compassion which motivates her in composing music - on this occasion she took her inspiration from our Cave Hill.

Who amongst us doesn't like a little twist to a story? You no doubt have said to yourself the title should have been *'Walk on Cave Hill'*. I must confess I said the same!

Walk on Belfast was indeed originally titled 'Walk on Cave Hill'. However when it came to be published in 1999, the American publishers didn't think anyone would relate to where Cave Hill was situated. There was a quick last minute change to 'Belfast'. The title with 'Belfast' in it should have read 'Walk in Belfast' but the 'on' was left after Cave Hill was taken out. So now it's a mix between the two!

Recently Janet has yet again ventured further in her field by moving to London and commuting to Derry/ Londonderry where she is now 'Visiting Professor of Music' at University of Ulster Magee. I take this opportunity to wish her every success in the new post.

My sincerest thanks to Dr. Janet Harbison for giving permission to publish this article.

Bran Óg.

Sleeping Giant

Dawn mist rises over your reclining head like morning shower steam and you inhale its chill breath.

*You rise...twelve hundred feet of basalt rock
Bastion of north Belfast
Safeguard of our city.*

Gulliver's titanic eyes have gazed down on us over the millennia, your secrets held in lava bubble caves, you gave refuge to our ancient tribes.

Now we, your Lilliput people, take our Sunday pilgrimage to climb Napoleon's nose.

Scrambling down your scree slopes midst screeching swallow skies.

Sleeping giant,

Keep your craggy gaze on us...

Frances MacKenzie



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My Cave Hill Story

Here is an article written by Jack, the youngest member of the Cave Hill Campaign, who has now turned 8.
(though he was 7 when he wrote the article below).

My Cavehill Story

My name is Jack I am 7 years old and I am the youngest member of CCS. I like the cavehill because it's like a big adventure I also help keep it clean and tidy because I am a member. The thing I like most about the cavehill is the White Stone the White Stone is made from quartz and is protected by the cavehill fairies. The fairies were very sad because someone burnt down their fairy tree so now they need to make sure the cavehill is protected only me and one other person know how to get to the White Stone and we look after to make sure it's not damaged. I also enjoy walking up and down the steep hills and looking out over Belfast from McArts Fort this is where the fairies meet and plan how to protect the cavehill. Sometimes they even disguise themselves as bunny rabbits. On my way back down I really look forward to going into Belfast castle for a wee drink and a bun.

this is my story about the cavehill and why I love going there

Jack McCallan
age: 7

SPAR 

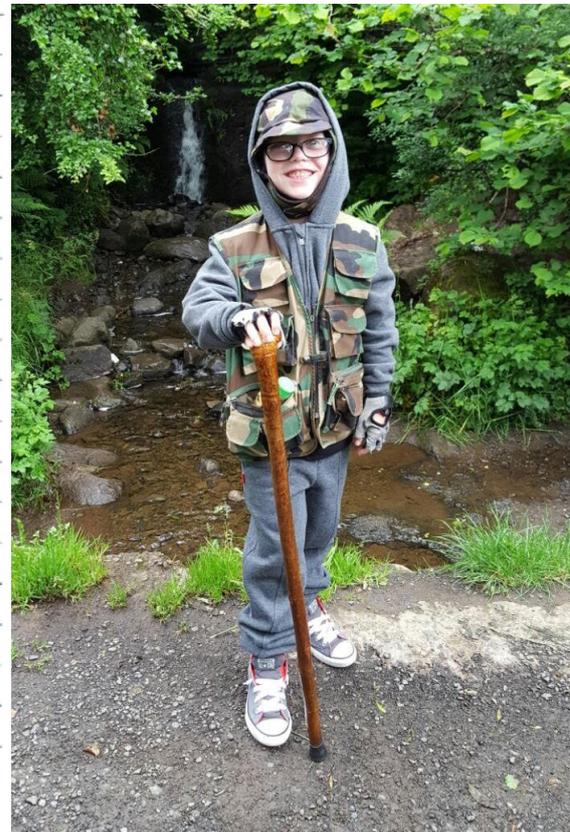
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Below: Jack at his Fairy Glen



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All these activities are free.

For more information, contact us: Website: www.cavehillconservation.org

Facebook: Cave Hill Conservation Campaign

Email: cormachamill@cavehillconservation.org

Phone: (028) 9029 1357

Date	Times	Theme	Legend
Saturday 15 April	1000-1300	The birds of Cave Hill.	Get up close to some of our native birds. Licensed bird ringer Aidan Crean will catch, ring and release them and allow us to see them in beautiful detail. Meet at the Castle.
Saturday 6th May	0500-0730	Dawn chorus.	John O'Boyle will lead a dander around the Park to hear and identify birds. Specially designed for early risers! Meet at the gates to the Park at the top of Innisfayle Park.
Saturday 20 May	1000-1300	Forage on Cave Hill.	Phil Simpson has a fund of practical knowledge and plant lore. We'll walk in his company to see what useful plants we can find. Meet at the Castle.
Saturday 17 Jun	1000-1300	The flora of Cave Hill.	Karl Hamilton will guide us on a plant identification walk in the Nature Reserve in Ballyaghagan at the back of the hill. Meet at the entrance to the Park at the top of the Hightown Road.
Saturday 15 Jul	1000-1300	Butterflies & mini-beasts.	Northern Ireland's Big Butterfly Count begins today. Find and examine some of our most beautiful wildlife in the company of Catherine Bertrand and learn some of the mysteries of their lives. Meet at the Castle.
Saturday 19 Aug	1000-1300	A general walk on Cave Hill.	Cormac Hamill will lead a general history walk to the top of the Hill. Meet at the Castle.
Friday 1 Sep	2100-2300	Bats of Cave Hill.	Aidan Crean will introduce us to these enchanting nocturnal animals during an evening dander. Meet at the Castle.
Saturday 16 Sep	1000-1300	The archaeology of Cave Hill.	Local archaeologist Cormac McSparron will lead a trip to the various remains on the hill from the Neolithic period to the early Christian period. Meet at the entrance to the Park at the top of the Hightown Road.
Saturday 6 Oct	1930-2200	Cave Hill by moonlight.	An enchanting walk over the Cave Hill lit only by the light of the full moon.
Saturday 21 Oct	1000-1300	The rocks of Cave Hill.	Kirsty Lemon is an enthusiast for her geology profession and she will delight in explaining the geological origins of Cave Hill on this walk over the hill. Meet at the Castle.



CALLING ALL MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS!

If you are a member wishing to renew your membership for 2017, or a new member wishing to join, it's never been simpler! Please attach a cheque to the form below and send it to:

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- If you are a current British taxpayer, please tick here (we will then be able to reclaim the income tax already paid from the Inland Revenue. Ticking this box will not cost you any more money, but will benefit the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign.)

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