

Press Release

Wednesday 15th February 2012

Focus on 1998 - From the signing of the Good Friday Agreement to a possible Truth Commission for Northern Ireland

An exhibition titled, 'Events of the Year Quilts and Testimonies of Survival', opening in the Tower Museum this week by Mayor Alderman Maurice Devenney, shows a stunning display of quilts by Northern Ireland artist, Irene Mac William, depicting her concerns of the events in a given year.

In the context of this exhibition the 1998 Year Quilt will be highlighted and accompanied by a Seminar to take place on Tuesday 21st February. As the year of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement when Northern Ireland entered a new phase in its political and social history, the emphasis on leaving the past behind and focusing on a future of peace has since uncovered the need for a Truth Commission, a framework for investigating many of the cases that have gone unsolved.

Professor Brice Dickson, chair of the seminar said: "The seminar aims to encourage discussion around what should be done, if anything, to deal with the past in Northern Ireland, focussing on what other countries in conflict have done when entering a new era of peace and reconciliation."

The seminar will include presentations from Keara Powell and Mairead Collins, both of whom have studied the subject of Truth Commission of Northern Ireland. Keara has recently completed a dissertation as part of her LLW in Human Rights Law from Queens University, currently works with a Law firm in Belfast. Mairead, who has completed a thesis on post-conflict transitional justice, is a policy and research assistant with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Consortium and blogger on rights issues for www.rightsni.or and Amnesty International.

Margaret Edwards from the Museum Service welcoming the seminar said: "We are delighted to host this seminar as part of the current exhibition at the Museum. It will provide not only an insight into a much debated topic, combined with the presentations from guest speakers and open forum for discussion will provide many angles to explore."

Seminar will take place at 12pm-2pm on Tuesday 21st February 2012 at the Tower Museum, Derry-Londonderry.

As part of the Seminar, a brief tour of the exhibition will be given by curator Roberta Bacic. Places are limited so booking is essential. Tel: 028 71 372411

'Events of the Year Quilts and Testimonies of Survival' runs from 16th February- 24th March 2012 at the Tower Museum, Derry-Londonderry, and from the 4th April – 30th June 2012 at Donegal Country Museum, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.

Ends

Further press information can be obtained by contacting Derry City Council's Marketing and Communications Section, Tel. 02871 37 6504