Local project to examine heritage from pre-history to the 20th century

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A local heritage project will map the history and major stories of Annaclone over thousands of years from antiquity to the 20th century, thanks to £25,000 funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The money will support Gathering and Promoting Annaclone and Drumballyroney's Celtic, Ecclesiastical and Emigrant Stories, a project led by the Annaclone Historical Society.

Often overshadowed by its connection to 19th-century authors the Bronte sisters, whose clergyman father Patrick was born in Drumballyroney, the society believes the area has a much richer story to tell.

It plans to get the local community actively involved in the project to map out the wider heritage from researching Celtic heritage, stories of local emigrants through to the ecclesiastical heritage. Alongside the research programme, the project will share what is uncovered through a series of talks, open nights, print and digital publications.

Settlements near Annaclone go back to ancient history - with a Neolithic Cairn on the summit of Knockiveagh, several standing stones, raths and forts throughout the area. It is also home to the famous Ardbrin Bronze Horn, one of the best Celtic bronze horns ever found in Europe, now in the National Museum in Dublin.

The area has experienced various political and power struggles from Gaelic Lords, to the Norman Invasion, Cromwellian settlement, agrarian and religious strife, landlordism, and Partition.

Úna Duffy, HLF NI Development Manager, welcomed the grant award, saying: “Annaclone and Drumballyroney area has unique local heritage and we are delighted to be able to make this award to support the community to explore and share their heritage.

“The South Down area has lots of other heritage stories waiting to be uncovered from its natural environment, listed buildings and its cultures and traditions. We would encourage other local groups to follow the Historical society’s example and see if HLF can help with your project idea.”

Kieran Heenan, from the Annaclone Historical Society, said: “We are delighted at this support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and everyone is looking forward to taking such a project forward.

“The local history of Annaclone and Drumballyroney is especially interesting – and over a long period of time – and our project will go a long way to highlighting this fascinating local heritage.”

Notes to editors

Since 1994 the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded £192million to over 1,000 projects across Northern Ireland.

Further information

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