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**FÉILE NA  
STAIRÉ  
FHINE GALL**

**2020**

12 – 19 Meán Fómhair

**FINGAL  
FESTIVAL  
OF HISTORY**

**2020**

12 – 19 September

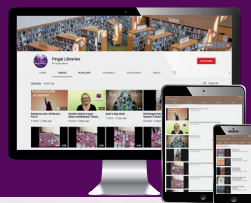


# Stair ag an gCaisleán: Sac Balbriggan

## History at the Castle: Sack of Balbriggan

Swords  
Cultural  
Quarter

All history talks this year will be recorded in the Chapel at Swords Castle and will be available on **Fingal Libraries YouTube Channel** and across our social media platforms.



The main theme of our Festival is the **Sack of Balbriggan** due to its centenary taking place this year. There will also be a series of other general history talks the topics of which are outlined in this brochure.

### – Speakers at The Castle –

#### **Sack of Balbriggan – A Retrospective View – Jim Walsh**

This talk will give the local and historical context and with the aid of images give a comprehensive account of the Sack of Balbriggan based on contemporary accounts, military and RIC archives, newspaper coverage, other publications and interviews.

**Jim Walsh** is a retired librarian and founding member of the Balbriggan and District Historical Society.

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#### **Music & Songs – Sack of Balbriggan – David O'Connor**

Selection of Songs and Music relating to the Sack of Balbriggan and The War of Independence, performed by David O'Connor and Aidan Lawlor with Helen Lawlor on the Harp. Songs will include *The Bold Black & Tan* and *Kevin Barry*.

**David O'Connor** native of Garristown but living in Ballyboughal has strong roots in rural Fingal having represented the area as a member of Fingal County Council for almost twenty years. He has a strong interest in local history and song. He is a founding member of the Fingal Walking Group and an active member of the Dublin-based Goilin traditional singing club.

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#### **Events interlinked to the Sack of Balbriggan – Cathal Boland**

Cathal's talk will focus on the events of 1920 outlining the moments and engagements that the Fingal Brigade were involved in. The period saw the loss of life on both sides and the emergence of an independent judicial system which tried from small transgressions through to acts which saw the death sentence passed.

**Cathal Boland** a current Councillor and former Mayor of Fingal and has an interest in Fingal history and has given many talks on key Fingal moments and the individuals who shaped the County over the past 250 years. A former Cathaoirleach of Fingal Old IRA (1916-1921) Commemorative Society Cathal has undertaken extensive reading and research of the period covering the 1916 Rising and War of Independence.



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## Sack of Balbriggan & how it inspired his successful children's novel "Pawns" – Brian Gallagher

This talk will cover the background history, how the novel came about, the importance of the nearby Gormanston Camp, and its switch from an RAF base to a centre for the Black and Tans, and how the burning of Balbriggan 100 years ago, with loss of civilian life, caused questions to be raised in parliament at Westminster. As part of the talk he will read the climactic scene from *Pawns* in which Balbriggan is set ablaze.



**Brian Gallagher** is a full time writer whose plays and short stories have been produced in Ireland, Britain & Canada. His novels for adults *Invincible*, *Flight*, *Payback* and *Pursuit* have won widespread acclaim and in more recent times he has produced an array of historical fiction books for older children including *Across the Divide*, *Taking Sides*, *Storm Clouds*, *Friend or Foe*, *Arrivals* and *Resistance*. He is currently working on a new novel *Making a Stand* due for publication in Spring 2021.

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## Ms. Molly Adrian – Lou Boland

Lou will tell of the life of Mary (Molly) Adrian, a woman who was brought up and lived for the main part of her life in North Dublin. Molly played an important role during the 1916 Rising and in the subsequent years of the struggle. Molly held elected office as a Member of the Balrothery Board of Guardians and was deeply involved in the affairs of her community.



**Lou Boland** originally from Kildare has lived in North Dublin for the past fifty years. She has developed an interest in and love of the rural area of North County Dublin and the involvement of its people in the 1916 Rising and the War of Independence.

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## 1920 – Local Government & the War of Independence in Fingal – Declan Brady

Declan will discuss an often overlooked dimension in the War of Independence that is the part played by local government in bringing the crown establishment to the negotiating table. The talk will include reference to the year 1920 including the local elections for Dublin County Council, Balrothery Rural District Council and Poor Law Guardians, when Sinn Féin won a majority and how they pledged their allegiance to Dáil Éireann.



**Declan Brady** is a historian and genealogist based in Swords, Co. Dublin with a history Masters from Maynooth University, where he is currently a John Hume PhD scholar.



## Tans & Auxiliaries – Brian Hanley

Brian will discuss the role of the Black and Tans and Auxiliary forces during the War of Independence.

**Brian Hanley** is a professional historian, author and lecturer on modern Ireland. He is currently an Assistant Professor in Trinity College, Dublin. His areas of expertise include the IRA, Irish republicanism, labour and radicalism, 1916 Easter Rising, 1918 General election, Irish Revolution & Civil War, Irish America and the Northern Irish conflict.

## 'The War of Independence in Dublin' – John Dorney

John will discuss how the War of Independence unfolded in Dublin

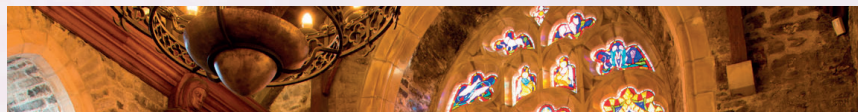
**John Dorney** is an independent historian and editor of the Irish Story website. His *Masters in History* was on Florence McCarthy and the Conquest of Gaelic Munster. He is the author of two books: *Peace After the Final Battle, the Story of the Irish Revolution*, and *The Civil War in Dublin, the Fight for the Irish Capital, 1922-1924*.

## Exhibition - Sack of Balbriggan

Fingal Local Studies & Archives have produced an exhibition about the Sack of Balbriggan. The exhibition curated by Catherine Keane, Senior Librarian will be on display in the Atrium at County Hall, Swords in September to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Sack of Balbriggan. This exhibition will also be available for viewing online.

## Swords Castle <https://swordscastle.events/>

Swords Castle was built by Archbishop of Dublin, John Comyn as his manorial residence around 1200. Excavation of the chapel in the 1970s unearthed a 14th century tile pavement, part of which is on display in the National Museum of Ireland. The recent excavations uncovered burials that appear to predate the building of the gatehouse. The chapel, Archbishop's private chambers and Constable's Tower are open to the public for viewing and a member of Fingal Tourist Board will assist with any questions you may have.



### April – September

Tuesday – Saturday 9.30am – 5.00pm  
Sunday 10.00am – 5.00pm  
(closed Monday)

### October – March

Tuesday – Saturday 9.30am – 4.00pm  
Sunday 10.00am – 4.00pm  
(closed Monday)

**For Tours Contact** T: +353 1 840 0891

**Fingal Tourism:** E: [info@fingaltourism.ie](mailto:info@fingaltourism.ie)

### Getting to:

**By Bus:** Nos. 33, 41, 41C Swords Express  
[www.dublinbus.ie/www.swordsexpress.com](http://www.dublinbus.ie/www.swordsexpress.com)

**By Car:** M1, R132, R122

## – Other History talks include –



**Cecelia Hartsell**  
(A series of three talks)

### Protest and Love of Country: Martin Luther King Jr. and the American Civil Rights Movement

This talk examines the progression of the American civil rights movement, including the interplay between the federal government and the grassroots activity fostered by Dr. King, which demonstrated the power of protest in effecting change.

### “I Live A New Life”: Frederick Douglass in Ireland

Frederick Douglass, an African American abolitionist and former slave, visited Ireland in 1845. His trip was shaped by a number of experiences, including meeting Daniel O’Connell and achieving a level of personal freedom unimaginable in his home country. This talk examines Douglass’s visit to Ireland and his role as an abolitionist.

### Blood Sacrifice: Political Struggles of Irish Nationalists and African Americans during the Great War Period

This talk examines World War I as an opportunity; the consequences faced post-war; and the complications of the public memory of that period.

**Cecelia Hartsell** is a U.S. historian, specialising in African American history and American social history. Since moving to Ireland, she has been a contributor to the RTE History Show and Radio Kerry on topics in U.S. history and frequently gives U.S. history talks for the Dublin Festival of History and in the Dublin public libraries. She has completed all of the requirements save dissertation and language requirement for a PhD in American history at Fordham University and has a Master’s degree in history from University College Dublin. She has published the following article: *‘The Great American Protest: African Americans and the Great Migration’ in 1916 in Global Context: An Anti-Imperial Moment*, Enrico Dal Lago, Róisín Healy, and Gearóid Barry, eds.

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## Where is my nearest library?

<b>Balbriggan</b>	01 870 4401 01 870 4402	balbrigganlibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Baldoyle</b>	01 890 6793	baldoylelibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Blanchardstown</b>	01 890 5563	blanchlibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Donabate</b>	01 890 5609	donabate.library@fingal.ie
<b>Garristown</b>	01 835 5020	garristownlibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Howth</b>	01 890 5026	howthlibrary.library@fingal.ie
<b>Malahide</b>	01 870 4430 01 870 4431	malahidelibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Rush</b>	01 870 8414	rushlibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Skerries</b>	01 890 5671	skerrieslibrary.library@fingal.ie
<b>Swords</b>	01 890 5894 01 890 5582	swordslibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Mobile Library Service</b>	01 822 1564	mobile.libraries@fingal.ie
<b>Library Headquarters</b>	01 890 5524	LibrariesHQ@fingal.ie
<b>Housebound Library Service</b>	01 860 4290 1850 211466 (Freephone)	houseboundlibrary@fingal.ie
<b>Local Studies and Archives</b>	01 870 4495 01 890 4486	Local.Studies@fingal.ie

## Fingal Libraries are on Social Media



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Clár Éire Ildánach  
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