

EXPERIMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND MATERIALITY OF THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD AT FERRYCARRIG, IRELAND

Course ID: ARCH 365AV

June 16–June 29, 2019

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTOR:

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This is an intensive program designed to introduce students to a particular specialty within the discipline. It is short and awards participants a limited number of credit units. This program may not be considered a full field school, nor should it be accredited as such by your home institution. . Students considering a full field school experience should apply to any of our standard 4-5 week-long programs.

INTRODUCTION

The program provides a practical introduction to the role of crafts, technologies and construction techniques in Ireland through time. Focusing on both the built environment and materiality in the medieval period, students will actively participate in a range of bespoke experimental archaeology workshops and projects. Through participation on this program students will be equipped with a good understanding of medieval society in general, with a specific focus on the role of technologies and materiality in people's lives at that time. The program also teaches many 'life-skills' such as creativity, problem solving, teamwork, time management, resourcefulness and project design and implementation.

What makes this program completely unique is its collaboration with a leading archaeological research project – *Digging the Lost Town of Carrig*. The experimental archaeology program is delivered adjacent an authentic *ringwork* castle (the Carrick ringwork), within the confines of the Irish National Heritage Park (INHP) in Wexford, southeast Ireland. This ringwork is one of Ireland's most important medieval monuments and crucial to the earliest stages of the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, being the first Norman fortification built in the country in 1169 CE. Archaeological excavations undertaken in the 1980s and by the IAFS since 2018 showed that significant evidence of the site's medieval history is preserved below the ground – including remnants of a 12th century fort with wooden structures, 13th century stone

castle and 14th century hall and chapel. Students on the experimental archaeology program will not be excavating, but they will be actively partnering with the archaeologists. As part of the experimental archaeology program students will be given an in-depth tour(s) of the site and expected to understand the archaeology intimately, as it is these very archaeological features that they will be replicating in workshops. As the archaeologists on the site uncover the history of both the site and buildings the results are communicated in almost 'live time' to the experimental archaeology students, underpinning their projects with exceptional authenticity and added significance.

For example, students will actively participate in explaining the sites history to the public through the creation of one to one scale building replicas, undertake ancient technology workshops that are authentic to the site/period and construct replica walls on the exact location that 700 or 800-year-old buildings once stood. Their work will leave a legacy as an educative resource for both the Carrick project and the INHP – allowing future visitors and students a chance to better comprehend the history of this most important site and medieval society in general.

A further strength of the program is the partnership with the INHP - Ireland's largest open-air museum, measuring 35 acres (14 hectares). The park depicts 9,000 years of re-created history, from first settlers to the coming of the Normans, situated within natural forestry and wet woodlands. The park is a cornerstone of *Ireland's Ancient East* and provides a stunning backdrop to the program. INHP specializes in communicating heritage to the local community and wider public, including through the provision of experimental archaeology initiatives and craft workshops – including a replica Bronze Age *fulacht fiadh* (cooking place), which at over 30 years continuous use is one of the longest continuing experimental archaeology projects in the world. During their time in the park students will be taught an appreciation on the importance of communicating heritage, and the role experimental archaeology can play in this.

While on the program students will be housed in homestay accommodation in rural locations. Their closest major town is the stunning medieval centre of Wexford Town.

Wexford Town

Wexford town is nestled on the estuary of the River Slaney, on the southeast coast of Ireland. The town is one of the country's great Viking and medieval townscapes, with intact medieval streetscapes and numerous upstanding archaeological monuments. The town of Wexford is named from the Norse "Waesfiord", meaning "the inlet of mudflats", a clear reminder of its Viking Heritage, which dates from the early 9th century CE. Since the Viking period the beautiful port town has been impacted by foreign invaders, sieges, a famous insurrection and the gradual decline of its once crucial maritime industries.

One of the most significant historical events to impact Wexford (and Ireland) occurred in May of 1169, when a force of roughly 500-600 Norman and c. 500 Irish soldiers, led by Robert Fitzstephen, Maurice de Prendergast and the recently deposed Irish king of Leinster, Diarmait Mac Murchada, attacked and defeated the Norse-Irish town. Following the capture of Wexford Mac Murchada granted lands, including the Norse town itself, to Robert Fitzstephen and Maurice Fitz Gerald. In an effort to fortify the region Robert Fitzstephen built a wooden 'ringwork' castle on top of a large rock at Ferrycarrig, directly overlooking a strategic point on the River Slaney (approximately 4km west of the town). This ringwork is the current location of this IAFS program.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The program will introduce students to a range of traditional building techniques as well as past crafts and technologies – with a focus on the medieval period. During this two-week intensive program at the INHP students will deliver their own unique project(s) – helping in both project design and implementation. Student learning will be complimented by tours to a number of heritage sites, as well as a series of archaeological lectures/workshops. After this program, students will:

- Have an understanding of traditional skills, crafts and technologies
- Understand the background of experimental archaeology in Ireland
- Critically interrogate historical records and archaeological survey data, as part of an overall project design
- Have an understanding of the skills required for maintenance and repair of medieval monuments

- Deliver a unique permanent project, which will become part of the park's/archaeology project's teaching resource
- Have an understanding of the medieval history of both Ireland and Wexford
- Understand how heritage can be explained and presented in an engaging manner to visitors and the community alike – especially in the context of an open-air museum
- Gain a base understanding of changing materiality in Ireland through time

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 2 semester credit units (equivalent to 3 quarter credit units) through our academic partner, Connecticut College. Connecticut College is a private, highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see grading assessment and matrix). This field school provides a minimum of 160 direct instructional hours. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and registrars at their home institution prior to attending this field school.

Transcripts: An official copy of transcripts will be mailed to the permanent address listed by students on their online application. One more transcript may be sent to the student home institution at no cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the National Student Clearinghouse: <http://bit.ly/2hvurkl>.

PREREQUISITES

There are no academic prerequisites. This program is hands-on, experiential learning in a live field environment. What is required is enthusiasm, an open mind and a readiness to 'give it a go'.

DISCLAIMER – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Our primary concern is with education. Traveling and conducting field research involve risk. Students interested in participating in IFR programs must weigh whether the potential risk is worth the value of education provided. While risk is inherent in everything we do, we do not take risk lightly. The IFR engages in intensive review of each field school location prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the IFR reviews each program annually to make sure it complies with all our standards and policies, including student safety.

We do our best to follow schedule and activities as outlined in this syllabus. Yet local permitting agencies, political, environmental, personal, or weather conditions may force changes. This syllabus, therefore, is only a general commitment. Students should allow flexibility and adaptability as research work is frequently subject to change.

You should be aware that conditions in the field are different than those you experience in your home, dorms or college town. Archaeological fieldwork in Ireland is carried out in all weather conditions – including rain. You are required to provide suitable waterproof and weatherproof clothing and footwear as well as wind protection. However, in bad weather you will also be provided with shelter. Archaeological investigation will include moderately strenuous physical work. Students must be in good physical condition and able to walk three miles a day comfortably.

If you have medical concerns, please discuss them with your doctor. All other concerns may be discussed with the project director – as appropriate.

GRADING

Fieldwork Participation (60%): Students are required to participate fully in the daily schedule. Assessment will be undertaken by the supervisory team and will be based on attendance, willingness to work and to try diverse tasks, attention to detail and accuracy, participation in teamwork and contribution to discussions.

Field Journal (30%): Students are expected to maintain a field journal and present it for evaluation during their final week. This notebook should record student's daily activities, including details on geological mapping exercises, notes on all fieldwork, check-lists of flora and fauna and details of lectures and laboratory exercises, as well as personal observations.

Presentation (10%): At the start of Week 2, students will be required to give a 3-minute presentation on a research topic of their choice, but which must be related to the program. The presentation will be given to the group in the form of a 'Ted Talk' and may use power point or other visual aids.

ACCOMMODATION

Students will stay with local families in the County of Wexford. Home Stay students live with local families, and experience true home life in provincial Ireland. Students will be brought to the site daily. Students should understand that the host families are in rural settings, requiring taxis to reach the town of Wexford. Breakfast and dinner will be provided along with a packed lunch. Students are encouraged to avail of their free time at weekends and explore Ireland.

TRAVEL & MEETING POINT

Hold purchasing your airline ticket until six (6) weeks prior to departure date. Natural disasters, political changes, weather conditions and a range of other factors may require the cancelation of a field school. The IFR typically takes a close look at local conditions 6-7 weeks prior to program beginning and make Go/No Go decisions by then. This time frame still allows the purchase of discounted airline tickets while protecting students from potential loss of airline ticket costs if we decide to cancel a program.

Students will be met at Ferrycarrig, Co. Wexford. Since students will arrive on different flights at different times of the day, we will meet all students on Sunday, June 16th, at the Irish National Heritage Park at 4.30pm. Full details on reaching the park will be provided in the online orientation once you are enrolled in the course.

If you fail to make the meeting, please call/text or email Dr. Denis Shine. You will be sent relevant contact details once you are enrolled in the course.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of the US and Canada do not require visas to enter Ireland. You will need your passport to be valid for at least 90 days and will enter on a tourist visa.

No vaccinations are required for entry to Ireland but anyone working on this program should have an up-to-date tetanus shot.

CULTURE, LOCAL ENVIRONMENT & ETIQUETTE

The town of Wexford is 155km (about 95 miles) south of Dublin. Wexford is a quintessentially classic, small, friendly and safe Irish town. All the relevant local government agencies are aware of the students' presence in the town, and they and all townspeople are anxious to ensure that your stay is safe and enjoyable. Students are asked to respect local sensitivities and traditions and to understand that the presence of such a large expedition in town does not entitle participants to any special treatment or privileges.

This project can involve the participation of volunteers from the local community (or elsewhere) alongside IFR students. Although everyone will speak English, all students should expect surprising cultural differences and exciting opportunities to learn not only about the past but about the lives of others as well. Students will be immersed in Irish culture through learning, language, food and music, and should be prepared for the rewards and challenges that life in a different culture will offer.

Please note: As the project is a public archaeology initiative, students must also be prepared to engage with the local community in a professional and respectful manner both in an official capacity on site and unofficially when off duty.

TOOL KIT

Students are required to bring a basic tool kit. This includes but is not limited to:

- Work **gloves**: gardening glove suitable for work in wet weather (textile glove with a rubberised palm).
- Work shoes or boots: **closed toe-footwear, waterproof** that will be comfortable for both walking and kneeling: a hiking style shoe or boot would be suitable. Gumboots/wellingtons are also suitable for use on site however if you choose to wear these, you may need pair of trail shoes or similar for field trips etc.
- **Waterproof outdoorwear**: a jacket (with a hood if possible) and pants – gore-tex is best (but expensive). You will need something sturdy that will stand up to wear and tear of everyday use on the program. You can buy waterproof gear locally in Ireland (if you choose to do this, budget to spend about €50/\$70).
- **Warm layers** – wool, fleece, thermal layers – you should bring and wear lots of layers rather than one warm/heavy layer. Bring things that are suitable for outdoor work.
- **Sunscreen**: students should wear an SPF daily to protect against UV exposure and windburn.
- **Hat**: something to keep your head warm. A peaked hat can be useful for shade while on the program.
- **Laptop/tablet**: a device on which you can prepare and submit your presentation and written assignments. A smart phone is not suitable for this.

FIELD PROGRAM

The field program, while focused on experimental archaeology, includes instruction on Irish history and the archaeology of the medieval period in general. The program is based on the Ferrycarrig site in Wexford, although students will also be brought to a regional heritage site each week. Site and project orientations will be conducted at the start of week one.

Week 1: Following project orientation and induction students will be introduced to ancient technologies and construction techniques in the medieval period. Working directly with the archaeologists – who will educate this programs students through tours, led workshops, lectures, etc - students will be expected to design and deliver a project reflecting the buildings that once stood at the Carrick archaeological site.

Week 2: Students will be introduced to medieval life, including diet, food-processing, craft, industry etc. Through a range of experimental archaeology workshops, they will gain an insight to medieval society at large, and life at the Carrick site in the 12th and 13th century more specifically.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All IFR field schools begin with safety orientation. This orientation includes proper behavior at the field area, proper clothing, local cultural sensitivities and sensibilities, potential fauna and flora hazards, review of IFR harassment and discrimination policies, and review of the student Code of Conduct.

In addition to working on site, students will be introduced to Irish archaeology through a series of lectures/workshops (as outlined below). Students are given free time on their one full weekend, to allow them to explore Ireland.

The normal working day is from 9:00am to 5:00pm with a morning tea break from 11:00-11:30am and lunch from 1:30-2:15pm. Students will have weekends free to explore the area and other parts of the country.

INDICATIVE SCHEDULE *

Week	Day/Date	Time	Event
Construction and Technology			
1	Sunday June 16 th	Evening	Students arrival and welcome meeting @ 4.30pm
	Monday 17 th	Morning	Orientation
		Afternoon	Field trip 1: Carrick castle and borough; Wexford town (time permitting)
	Tuesday 18 th	Morning	Traditional sourcing, crafting and manufacture of timber – focusing on medieval techniques

		Afternoon	
	Wednesday 19 th	Morning	Traditional sourcing, crafting and manufacture of timber – focusing on medieval techniques
		Afternoon	
	Thursday 20 th	Morning	High Medieval construction in stone, using traditional techniques
		Afternoon	
	Friday 21 st	Morning	High Medieval construction in stone, using traditional techniques
		Afternoon	
	Saturday 22 nd	All day	Free Day
	Sunday 23 rd	All day	Free Day
Medieval Life & Craft			
2	Monday 24 th	All day	Field Trip 2: Ferns castle, cathedral and town
	Tuesday 25 th	All day	Medieval diet and food preparation: In depth and participative look at medieval diet, with a focus on meat and butchery with an ethical hunter
	Wednesday 26 th	All day	Medieval craft and industry: In depth and participative look at medieval craft, with a focus on iron smelting and iron-working
	Thursday 27 th	Morning	Ted talk Journal submission Quiz
		Afternoon	Medieval feast preparation
	Friday 28 th	Morning	Medieval feast: Using skills learnt during the program students will be expected to design and deliver a full medieval feast, including all preparation of food, construction of cooking areas, seating etc.
		Afternoon	Workshop on medieval falconry Prepare for Saturday Departure
	Saturday 29 th	All day	Depart program

**Please note: changes to this schedule will occur due to factors beyond our control such as weather, etc.*

MANDATORY READINGS

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RECOMMENDED READINGS

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- Duffy, S. 1997. *Ireland in the Middle Ages*. Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- McLoughlin, C. and Stafford, E. 2017. Excavation of the remains of an early thirteenth-century house at the Thomas Moore Tavern, Cornmarket, Wexford. In Doyle, I. and Browne, B (eds.). *Medieval Wexford: Essays in memory of Billy Colfer*. Four Courts Press, Dublin.
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- O' Keefe, T. 2015. *Medieval Irish Buildings 1100-1600*. Four Courts Press, Dublin
- Rondelez, P. 2014. Ironworking in late medieval Ireland, c. AD. 1200 to 1600. Unpublished PhD thesis submitted to University College Cork.
- Scott, A.B. and Martin, F.X. (eds.) 1978. *Expugnatio Hibernica by Giraldus Cambrensis*. New History of Ireland Ancillary Publication No. III. Royal Irish Academy. Dublin.