

Media Release

WWI Memorial Wall a fitting tribute to Waterford fallen

The 1,100 Waterford people who died in the First World War have been collectively commemorated in their home county for the first time with the dedication of an inscribed memorial wall in Dungarvan on Sunday afternoon (October 6th).

GOAL Chief Executive Barry Andrews gave the oration at the ceremony, which was attended by relatives, representatives of the Irish Defence Forces and British regiments, and all shades of political opinion. It culminated in the unveiling of the vast black granite monument – similar in concept, if not quite scale, to the Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C..

Approximately half of those named on the shrine have no known grave and in many cases family members have never seen their relatives' names commemorated anywhere. Now they have a place of remembrance on home soil.

Barry, whose grandfather Todd Andrews fought in the War of Independence, told the large public gathering beside Dungarvan Castle that the realisation of the Waterford Memorial project showed how Ireland has moved on from the divisions of the past. Ultimately, he said, those who died were "honest men and women fighting for what they considered to be a just cause... They are at home at last."

John Deasy TD, chairman of the Waterford Memorial Committee, thanked all those who'd helped bring the project to fruition. These included Dungarvan Town Council (particularly Town Clerk Joe O'Flaherty), Waterford Leader Partnership, Waterford City Council, private donors, David Kiely Monumentals, Tom Burnell (author of 'The Waterford War Dead'), and those families who'd made contact. He added that while every effort had been made to make the list of casualties as definitive as possible, there is space provided to add more names if necessary.

He said the research involved was an amazing experience in itself. "I thought about doing this after meeting a number of families of soldiers who didn't have a grave. I think people have different takes on the history, but it's vital we remember those who served and never came home. Now they never will be forgotten."

Waterford Memorial Committee: John Deasy (chairperson), Jim Shine, Willie Whelan, Donal Brady, Willie Fraher, Richard Power, Jim Stacey, Hal Chavasse, Mike MacEwan.

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