



Discover Northern Ireland

Devenish

Let's explore Activity Booklet (Key Stage 2)



..let's explore..



Northern Ireland
Environment
Agency

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DEVENISH ISLAND MONASTIC SITE: ACTIVITY BOOK

Introduction

Welcome to Devenish Island, the most beautiful of County Fermanagh's many historic monuments. The island and its **monastery** have a long history, stretching over 15 centuries. For nearly 1000 years, from the 6th century until the 16th century, it was one of the most important monasteries in Ireland. It has been a centre of religion and learning, been raided by Vikings and has seen its buildings burnt to the ground.

Over the years archaeologists have studied the buildings and graveyards of Devenish Island. Today you are going to follow in their footsteps – studying and learning from the ruins of the **monastery**. As you explore the island record your findings in this booklet.



DID YOU KNOW? - Devenish Island takes its name from the Irish "Daimh-Inis" which means "Ox Island". It is said that this is because it has the best cattle grazing in all of County Fermanagh

Meanings of words in bold, **like this**, can be found at the back of the booklet.



Devenish monastic site Co Fermanagh



- 1. The Lower Graveyard
- 2. The Lower Church
- 3. The Canon's House
- 4. The Maguire Chapel
- 5. St Molaise's House
- 6. The Round Tower
- 7. Upper Graveyard
- 8. St Mary's Abbey

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1. The Lower Graveyard

Q1. What age was John McMulehan when he died?

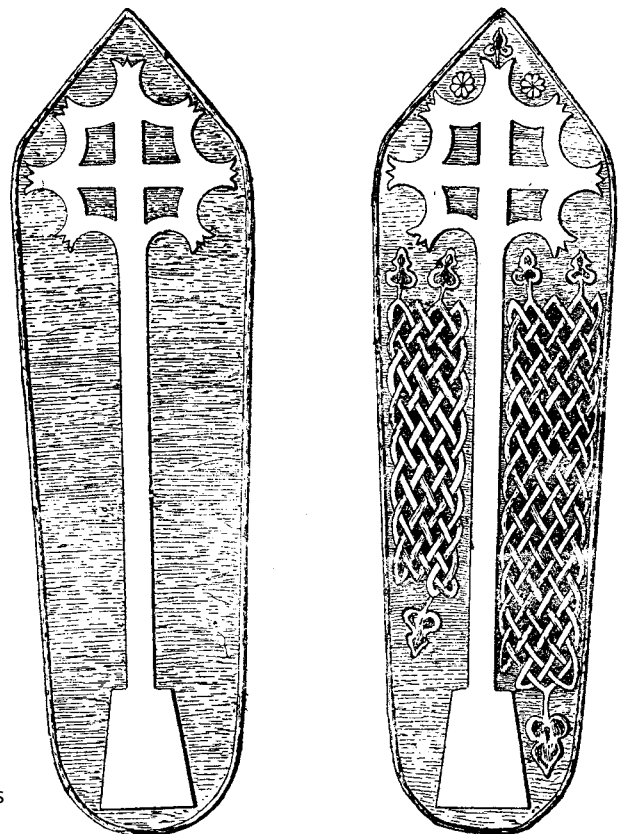
If he died on 23rd January 1781 in what year was he born?



Q2. In which century did James Sweeney die?

- a) 18th Century
- b) 19th Century
- c) 20th Century

Underline the correct answer



Grave slabs
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Q3. Make a crayon rubbing of one of the headstones on the paper provided.

Q4. Make a list of all the surnames you found. (some are difficult to read)

SURNAME	SURNAME	SURNAME

Q5. You will notice two types of headstone: 1. flat 2. upright
Using the tape measure the length and breadth of each type

	LENGTH	BREADTH
FLAT		
UPRIGHT		

Which is the larger?

Q6. What ages were the children who are buried in this graveyard?

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2. The Lower Church

This building is called TEAMPULL MOR or LOWER CHURCH.

It was built around 1225 and was dedicated to St Molaise.

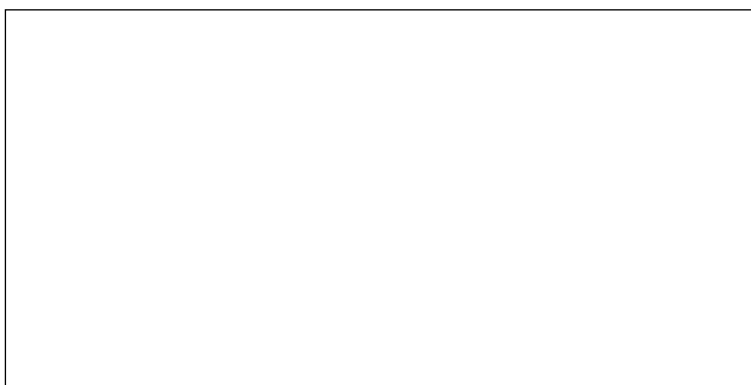
Take a good look around the inside and outside of the building and then answer the following questions along with others in your group.

Q1. Measure the length and breadth of the main part of the church.



LENGTH	BREADTH

Q2. There is only one window in the church.
Draw the window as it looks from inside the church.



Q3. There is a stone coffin-like object on the floor of the church. Measure the length and breadth of it

LENGTH	BREADTH

Q4. There is a story attached to this coffin that if you squeeze into it and turn three times you will get your wish.

A story like this is called a L_ _ _ _D

Q5. Which material is usually used to make coffins?



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3. The Canon's House

This is like a wing of the church building.

Q1. Can you spot any clues which tell you this building was more likely to be a house rather than a church?



Q2. If the house had only two rooms what do you think was the main use of each room?

Room 1

Room 2

Q3. Could it be that the house had more than two rooms? Explain your answer

Q4. Could the **Canon** get from the house directly into the tower?

YES

NO

Q5. How thick are the walls in the house?

Q6. Measure the length and breadth of one of the rooms of the Canon's house. Is it larger or smaller than your 'living room' at home? Circle your answer

Larger

Smaller

4. The Maguire Chapel

This is on the opposite side of the church to the Canon's house.

Q1. How many Maguire graves are in the chapel?
Find out the names and dates on each tombstone.



Name	Date

Q2. How many people do you think the Maguire chapel could hold?

Q3. Are both the Maguire **coat of arms** stone slabs inside the chapel?
Circle your answer

YES

NO

Q4. Which animal is shown on the Maguire **coat of arms**?

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5. St. Molaise's House

While this building is called a house it is, in fact, a very small church.

There are clues to its age in the decorations at some of its corners. These decorations were proof to historians that this building was built in the 12th Century. This building from the 12th Century was a **replica** of the original wooden building that Molaise built on the site in the 6th Century.



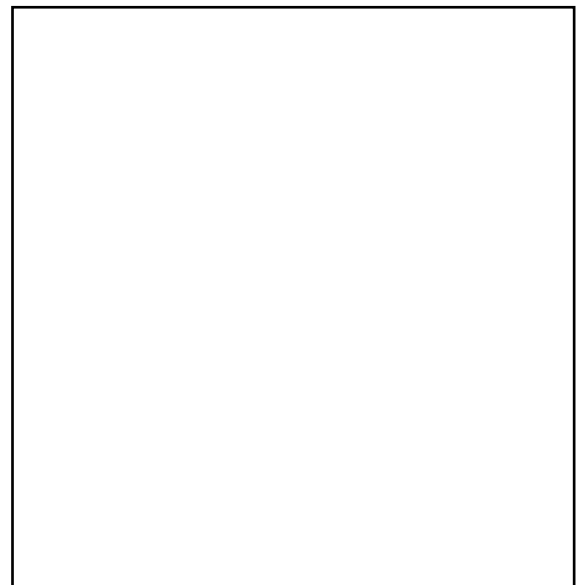
Q1. Measure the length and breadth of the house.

LENGTH	BREADTH

Q2. Draw any one of the decorations which are on some of the bottom corners on the outside of the house.

Q3. Why do you think one of the corners has no decorations?

Q4. Why are some of the decorations in better condition than others?



6. The Round Tower

Q1. Where are the windows in the tower?

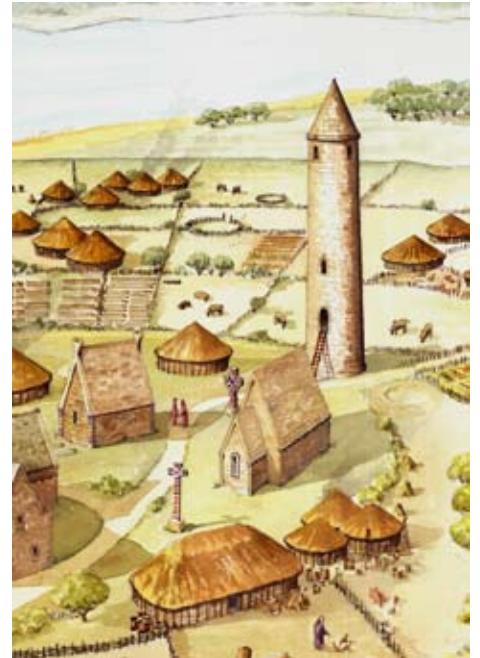
Q2. Where is the door?

Q3. When you look at the tower what do you see that would not have been there when the **monks** used the tower?

Q4. What might the **monks** have used instead?

Q5. What do you think the circle of stones close to the tower was?

Q6. Work out how high the door of the tower is from the ground.



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7. The Upper Graveyard and High Cross

Q1. Count how many gravestones there are.

Q2. Write down
The oldest gravestone

The youngest gravestone

Q3. Find Mary Seery's gravestone

When did she die?

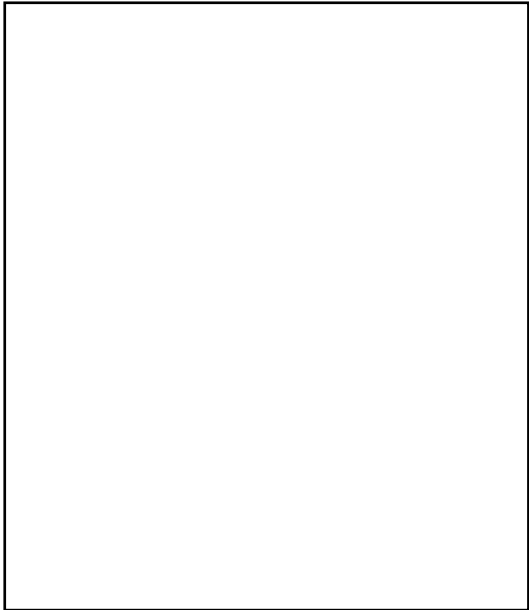
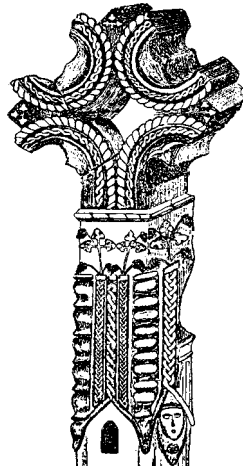
When was she born?

What age was she when she died?

What was her maiden name?
(the name she had before her marriage)

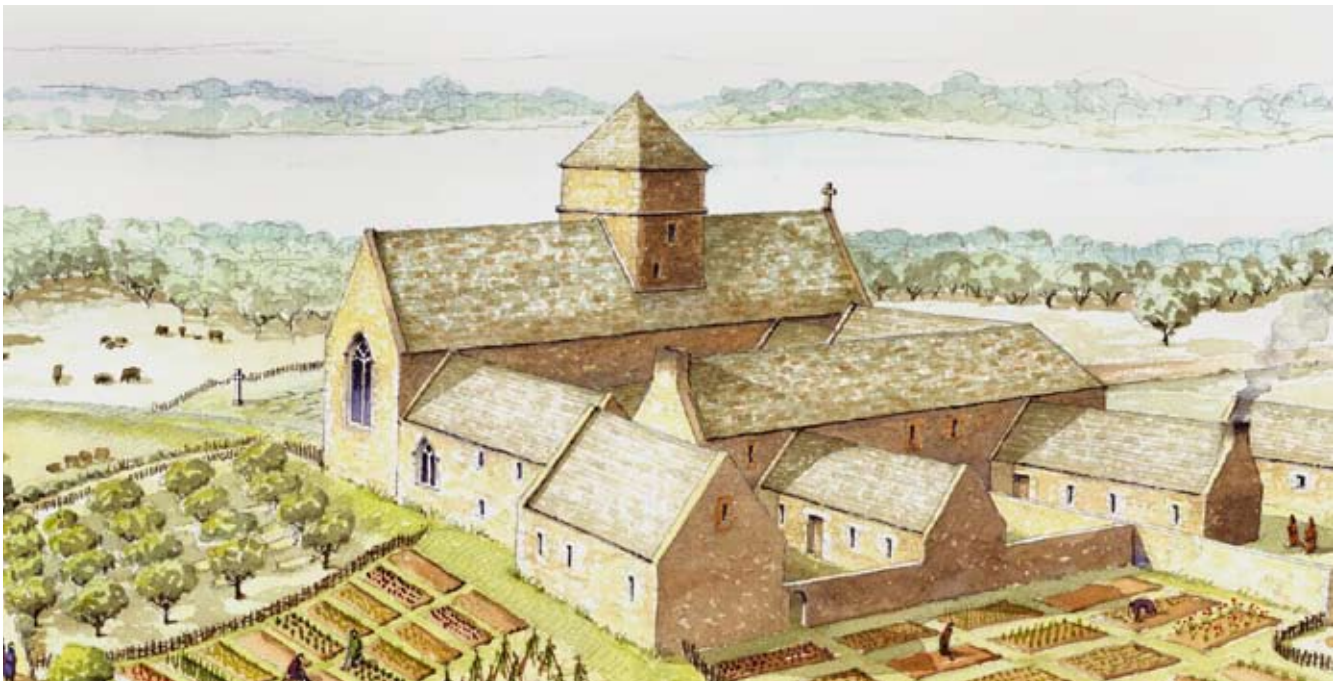


Q1. Sketch or draw the **High Cross**.



Q2. What causes the wear / damage to the cross?

Q3. Try to work out how high the Cross is.

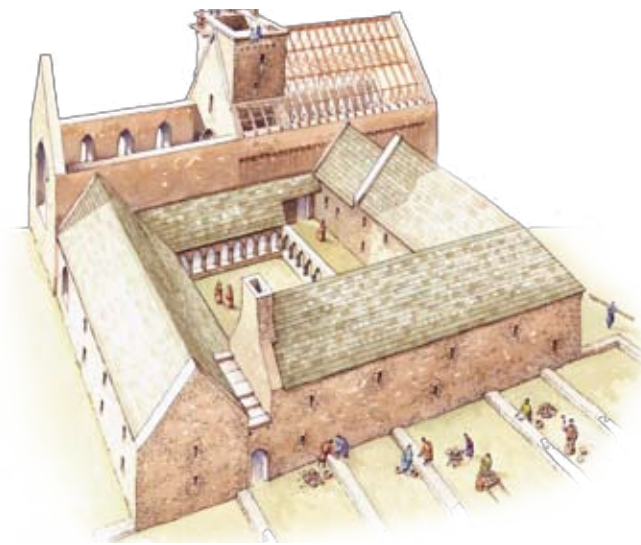


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8. The Priory – St. Mary's Abbey

Augustinian Monks came to Devenish in the 12th century. We know that around this time they built a church on the island but its remains cannot be found. In the 15th century they built St Mary's **Abbey**. A carved stone tells us that Matthew O'Doogan built the **Abbey** in 1449, for Bartholomew O'Flanagan, the **Prior** of Devenish (head of the **Monastery**).



St. Mary's Abbey - The Tower

Q1. How many steps are there in the stairway? _____

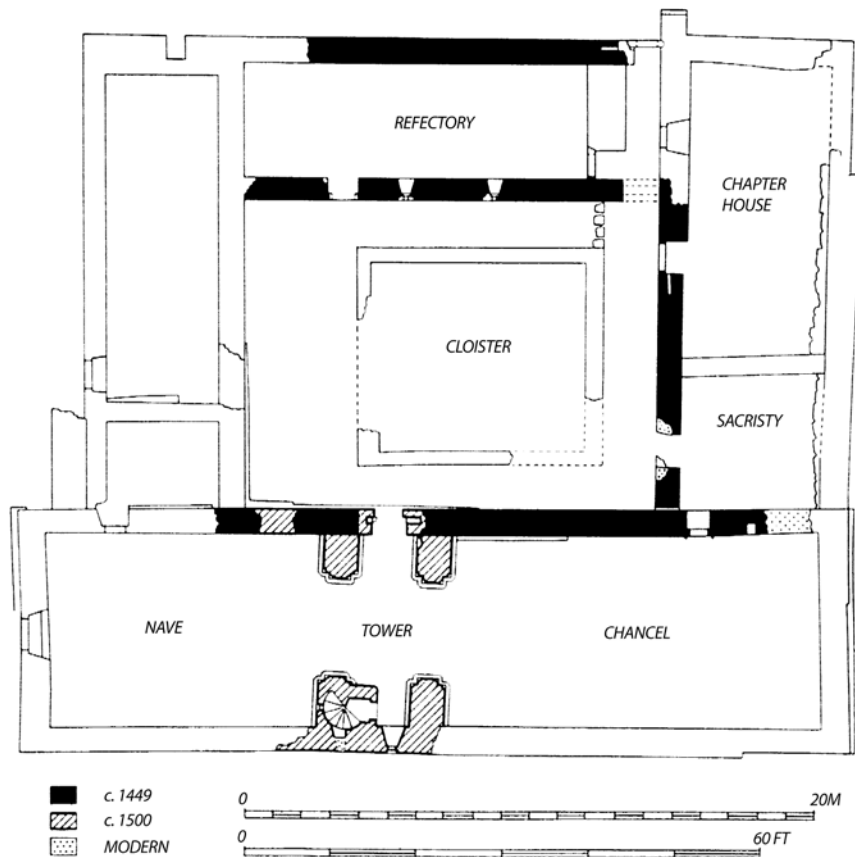
Q2. Why is the stairway circular?

Q3. How many windows are there? _____

Q4. What do you think the four stones sticking out of the wall were for?

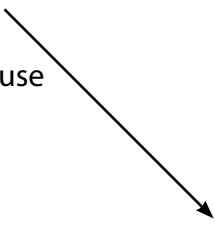
Q5. Look at the roof of the tower. What do you think the holes are for?

St Mary's Abbey – Floor Plan



Match these parts of the abbey with their meanings. One has been done for you.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Nave | The room where monks held meetings each morning. |
| Tower | The place in the church where the altar sat. |
| Chancel | An area surrounded by a covered walkway. |
| Sacristy | The monastery's dining hall. |
| Chapter House | The part of the church where ordinary people sat. |
| Refectory | Where the abbey's bells were hung. |
| Cloister | The room where communion vessels were stored. |



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Glossary

Abbey – a type of **monastery**.

Archaeologists – people who help us to learn about the past using evidence such as ruined buildings and graveyards.

Augustinians – **Monks** who followed rules set down by Saint Augustine.

Canon – a senior member of the **monastery**

Coat of Arms – the badge or crest of a family

High Cross – a type of tall, carved stone cross found across Ireland

Maiden name – a woman's surname before she marries.

Monastery – a religious community, usually isolated from the rest of the population.

Monk – a member of a **monastery** who promises to live a very religious life.

Prior – the most senior monk in a **Priory**

Priory – a type of **Monastery**, run by a **Prior**.



Timeline

6th century - the **monastery** was founded by St Molaise.

800 - Devenish is described as 'multitudinous', this means there were many monks in the **monastery**.

837 - Vikings raid the **monastery**.

11th century - the **monastery** was wealthy enough to own a Gospel-Shrine called the Soiscél Mo-Laise. This was a beautiful box decorated in silver and gold that originally held a copy of the gospels.

1157 - The wooden **monastery** on the island was destroyed by fire

1176 - a local king's son was killed in the Round Tower

12th century - the **Augustinians** came to Devenish

15th century - St Mary's **Augustinian Abbey** was built.

16th century - The **Monasteries** were dissolved (closed down) by Henry VIII

17th century - Parish worship moved from the island to Monea

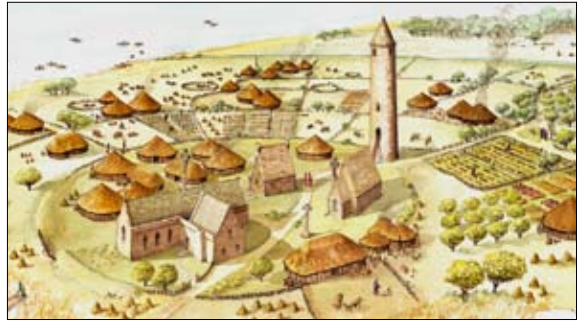
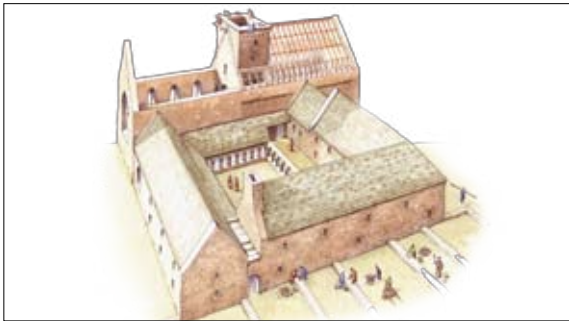
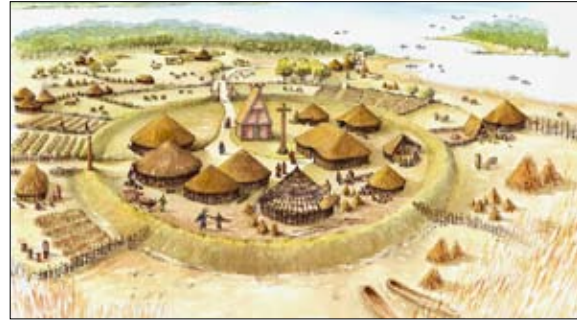
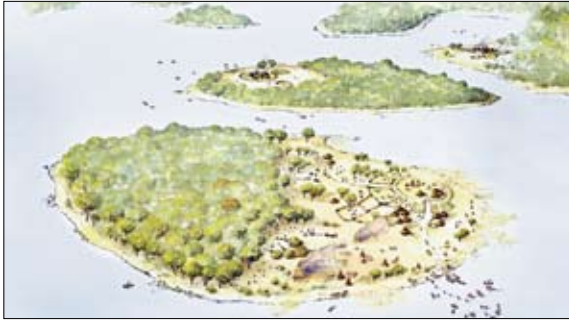
18th Century - Devenish continued in use as a place of burial.

1821 - 19 people were killed when a boat carrying a funeral to Devenish capsized.





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*Our aim is to protect, conserve and promote
our natural and built environment for the
benefit of present and future generations.*

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