

TITANIC

The tragic story that

FROM China to Germany, from Syria to America, the tragic tale of Titanic is a shared fascination

across the world. Belfast may be her birthplace but Titanic also visited three other ports - Southampton, Cherbourg and Queenstown (now Cork) - before setting sail for New York.

The city of Halifax in eastern Canada also claims a link through the part it played in retrieving many of the bodies following the disaster.

Many of the passengers were Americans which established a strong link between the USA and Titanic, but countries such as Norway, Sweden and Switzerland also feel strong links with the ship.

Passengers on board Titanic hailed from as far away as Turkey and Japan, sparking interest in the east in Titanic. This interest became particularly evident in 1997 when Titanic became the highest grossing film to ever be screened in China. However some of the strongest felt links are lesser known such as the link between Titanic and Germany.

One of the famous yellow gantry cranes that dominate the Belfast skyline may have been German, but a much earlier crane in those shipyards without which

Titanic could never have been built was also German. Additionally half of the famous Harland and Wolff partnership - Gustav Wolff - was also German. And the company sourced many parts of the ship from Germany. They bought the swinging crane, vital in Titanic's construction, from a firm in Dusseldorf as well as the gymnasium from Germany and floor tiles.

German beverages were also favoured with lager bought in from Munich as well as Mumm champagne and Langguth wines.

Closer to home the village of Addergoole in Co Mayo also claims a strong link with Titanic but for very different reasons. It lost more people proportionately in the Titanic disaster than any other place in the world.

Fourteen men and women from Addergoole set sail from Queenstown for a new life in America. But these dreams were dashed for 11 of them who died when the ship sank.

They are commemorating their loss by holding a cultural week from April 8-15, and also have a Titanic village and memorial park. Interest was renewed in the Titanic story by the release of the 1997 movie of the same name, but the build up internationally to the centenary of the sinking shows beyond a doubt that the world's fascination with the tragic ship is here to stay.



Stained glass window in memory of Titanic at Addergoole



Quest to preserve history

THE Titanic disaster occurred at a time of significant inventions and ocean liners reflected the cutting edge of that technological progress—electricity, refrigeration, telephone, wireless telegraphy and even fashion; people could travel in relative safety and comfort and the ability to communicate long distances was new and available to many. When the Titanic sank, reports travelled everywhere where previously mass communication hadn't developed. Newspapers were the only mass medium and personal accounts from survivors kept readers riveted. The rich and prominent were the "celebrities" of the day and the public followed their activities in the news and social pages. Five decades passed and if it weren't for Edward Kamuda of Springfield, Massachusetts, much of the information we have on Titanic wouldn't exist; it would have been lost through time and neglect.

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Vice President, Titanic Historical Society, Inc and Titanic Museum Massachusetts

A Titanic survivor's death was the catalyst that began a life's work of preserving the ship's history.

In 1963, a baker on board, whom Kamuda had been corresponding passed away. His landlady rubbished his Titanic mementoes. Kamuda was stunned at the cavalier attitude and promised to preserve the memory and history of the Titanic.

He read Walter Lord's, *A Night to Remember* and corresponded with the author. When J Arthur Rank made his book into a movie, Rank sent a promotional book with names and addresses of Titanic survivors for theater owners in the US to contact to attract American audiences.

In 1958 Kamuda wrote to the 87 and 75 responded. They were thrilled that someone was interested in their personal stories. When he asked if they

would write down their recollections, they were touched by the young man's sincerity; their accounts became the foundation for Titanic articles published and shared worldwide in the quarterly journal *Kamuda* began. The *Titanic Commutator* is still in continuous publication.

On July 7, 1963, five young men met at Kamuda's home and formed what became the Titanic Historical Society. Thirty survivors became Honor Members. In 2013, the THS will celebrate 50 years of preserving Titanic and White Star Line history. On the *TITANIC* movie set in 1996, where he was an extra, Jim Cameron paid tribute to Kamuda's influence when he called the actors together to introduce "the man who made it all possible".

Village that lost 11 emigrants

FOURTEEN people from the small parish of Addergoole in North West Co Mayo, whose principal village is Lahardane, were on RMS Titanic. Eleven perished, three women survived. Rural emigration for a better life was the reason.

Four of the group had been to America before; one had been born there and came back with her parents to take over the family farm. Lahardane signage shows that it's now Ireland's Titanic Village. The news of who had been saved and lost the sinking was slow to arrive in Lahardane, and confused. Bridget Donohue's was given as Bart Donohue on the list of those lost; Mary Canavan was given as Concannon, Mary Mangan as Mannion. With the centenary fast

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Addergoole Titanic Society

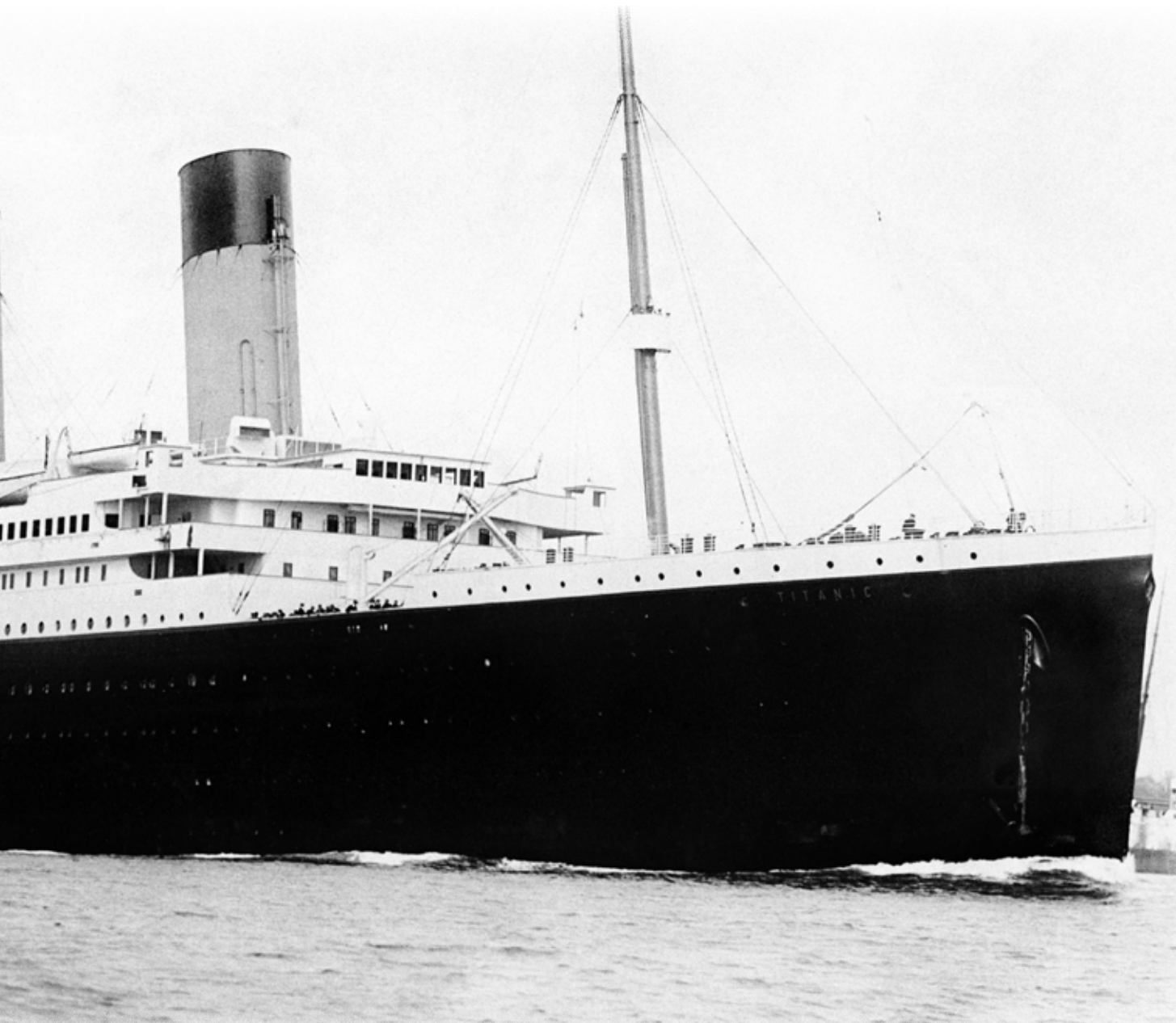
approaching Lahardane Village has plans for a Cultural Week (April 8-15) when the Addergoole Titanic Memorial Park will be opened and the newly installed Titanic-themed church stained glass window unveiled. This window showing Boat 16 lowered is based on Annie Kate Kelly's recollections. A man accompanying two women was refused entry. One woman said: "I'll not leave my husband", and the other "I'll not leave my brother". They were Catherine and Mary Bourke from Addergoole. Annie, also from Addergoole, next in line, was given a place. As the lifeboat was lowered she

looked up and saw her cousin, Pat Canavan and others. As the window depicts, Pat was holding his rosary beads and waving. The lifeboat's capacity was 65, but not full. There were 12 other passengers who also boarded at Queenstown and were saved in this boat, which was lowered at about 1.20am. Eight were from Co Longford, one from Co Kildare and three from Co Galway.

Come to Lahardane for the Mayo Titanic Cultural week (April 8-15). Visit our website for more information: www.mayo-titanic.com

A legend around the world

still holds fascination



US passions stirred by tale

Charles A Haas

President, Titanic International Society
Co-author, Titanic: Triumph and Tragedy
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A CENTURY after its loss, Titanic remains the subject of intense interest in the United States.

Our ties to the ship are many. Americans were the second largest nationality on board, with more than 300 passengers among the ship's complement. The ship was designed in part to bring thousands of immigrants to the United States. Titanic was an American-owned (but British-registered) ship, with the White Star Line part of the International Mercantile Marine Company, incorporated in New Jersey. When the ship left Southampton on her maiden voyage, she was flying an American flag at her foremast, representing her final destination.

It was a French-American team that found the ship, and an American company that has recovered more than 5,500 artifacts that powerfully link today's world to the world of a century ago, especially so after the passing of Titanic's last living survivor in May 2009. Interest in Titanic often begins in America's schools, where Walter Lord's *A Night to Remember* can be found in the curricula of many middle- and high schools; Titanic-themed chapters appear in textbooks of students as young as 8 years old. Internet-based research resources have allowed young people to explore much more deeply the personal stories of the 2,225 people on board. Arguably more Titanic books have been written by American authors than by any other nationality. American producer James Cameron's movie introduced a worldwide new generation to Titanic's story, and likely will do so again when the film is re-released in 3-D in April. Even a Broadway musical has contributed to Titanic's longevity; it's now performed by many American high school

and community theatre groups.

For Americans, Titanic remains the quintessential shipping disaster, the most famous ocean liner of all time, the biggest, grandest and fastest ever built (though actually none of these), and a microcosm of 1912 society.

We are fascinated by the ultra-wealthy Americans on board, but deeply touched by the humblest immigrants who remind each of us of our own roots.

Sadly, Titanic is also a symbol for failure: "Rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic" as a common metaphor for a hopeless task. Titanic serves means of quantifying other shipping disasters, as recent events have shown.

Titanic's brief life and the lives of her passengers and crew interest every demographic group, from the youngest to the oldest; male or female; wealthy or poor; urban, suburban or rural. At the time of the Challenger disaster in 1986, and the September 11, 2001 attacks on America, our media outlets drew parallels between these tragedies and Titanic – unheeded warnings, over-reliance on technology, the sacrifice of innocent lives, the true nature of heroism, safety lessons learned.

I'm often asked whether I believe Titanic will fade into obscurity after the centennial observances are over. With new generations of young people learning about the ship and its timeless lessons of heroism, self-sacrifice and the dangers of technological hubris, with thousands of Titanic-related websites and Titanic societies worldwide disseminating the unending "new" discoveries about Titanic and her people, I am confident that Titanic will continue to sail on in our collective memories for many years to come.

Germany's strong links with ship

LIKE the rest of the world, Germany is fascinated with the tragic story of this ship. It is similar in ways to the recent catastrophe of the cruise ship Costa Concordia where the technology was good but the captain made a mistake. It is important that people in the world learn from these catastrophes.

There are strong links between Germany and the Titanic from the German swinging crane used in its construction to floor tiles, champagne, wine and lager consumed in the restaurants and German passengers who were on board.

We have found it has not been possible to trace every passenger who may have been German on board. We know of several names such as August Meyer, a second class passenger from Hessen who died in the sinking, as

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well as second class passenger Josef Peruschitz from Wolfratshausen and third class passenger Leo Zimmerman. It is hard to trace people at this time, many were moving and emigrating in those uncertain times just before the First World War. Of course Gustav Wolff of Harland and Wolff who built Titanic was German. Harland and Wolff wanted to best money could buy when they were building Titanic and so many German items were brought to Belfast. For example, the swinging crane without which Titanic could not have been built was bought from Benrather

Maschinenbaufabrik AG of Dusseldorf, the gymnasium on board came from Rossel, Schwarz & Co in Wiesbaden, the floor tiles in the first class bathrooms came from Villeroy & Boch in Mettlach and the pianos were the world famous brand Steinway. In the restaurants the finest champagne of the day was served which was Mumm Extra Dry, a German champagne while Langguth wines and Spaten lager from Munich was also drunk. There will be scores of German visitors travelling to Belfast in April for the opportunity to experience the centenary of the Titanic in

Belfast.

We feel in ways it is a British and German boat and we want to pay our respects to those who died on it.

Each year on the anniversary we host the same 11-course meal that they would have eaten in the first class restaurant of Titanic, and we also have the drinks they would have drunk on the ship. We were the first to hold this sort of event and, at that time, people said we were "grave dining", but we feel it is a tribute to those who died in the sinking of the ship. Visitors from Britain have paid tribute to how respectful our events are. Titanic is an important part of history and it is right that we remember the great ship but also pause to think of those who died after she sank.