

Biography of Anne Donaldson, Coolyduff, Inniscarra, Co. Cork, Ireland

The advent of the Millennium combined with the sale of the Ballincollig Military Barracks awakened a need to research this important piece of local history that was likely to be swept away by the then planned rapid development. Anne's first project, with the support of many of the local voluntary organisations, led to the restoration and recording of the British Military Graveyard. This led to the publication of *British Military Graveyard, Ballincollig* which was launched by the Military Attaché to the British Embassy. The launch had a strong message of healing between communities. Indeed, one elderly attendee became emotional and grateful, declaring the event : "gave them permission at last to admit to having served in the British Army". This was a most unexpected result.

The book sold out within a few weeks, giving Anne the momentum to record all the soldiers who served in Ballincollig. This was a huge undertaking for a lone volunteer working from her kitchen table between other commitments. She got side-lined by the centenary of WW1, as she was asked by the Muskerry local history society to compile a list of locals who served in WW1. More than 200 were found. Including all those who were born at Ballincollig barracks and served in WW1 would have been overwhelming. In 2016, she returned to her first love. The collection of names of military men and their families were resurrected and added to. Editing produced various challenges, including the demise of some of the varied websites used as sources. This is the main source of possible errors.

Anne Donaldson comes from a long family tradition of local and general history interest. For many years she was involved with various research projects, self-employed as the Archive Detective. Following on her research for the Cork City Gaol Visitor Attraction, she returned to education, obtaining an M.Phil on the Irish Prison System of the 19th century. Now retired, she contributes to local history societies and is a founder member of the Inniscarra History Society.

She hopes this collection will encourage others around the country to record the history and names of their own local barracks.