

CROSS-BORDER ROADS TO AND FROM THE AGREEMENT: *from the ground up*



Centre for
Cross Border Studies



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#CCBSconf

24th Annual Conference

Thursday 14th September 2023 • Hilton Belfast



Programme

9.00am NETWORKING BREAKFAST

10.00am WELCOME

Peter Osborne, Chairperson | Centre for Cross Border Studies

10.15am PANEL 1 - *Generously supported by NICVA and The Wheel*

CHAIR: **Olwen Dawe**, Policy Analyst, Consultant & CCBS Board Member

Ailbhe Smyth, Activist, Campaigner & Strategy Specialist

Bronagh Hinds, Senior Associate | DemocraShe

Eileen Weir, Greater North Belfast Women's Network Co-Ordinator | Shankill Women's Centre

11.15am KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Colin Davidson

12noon LUNCH

1.00pm PANEL 2 - *Generously supported by North West Tertiary Education Cluster*

CHAIR: **Maureen O'Reilly**, Economist & CCBS Senior Research Associate

Kyra Reynolds, Development Worker | Peace Barriers Programme

Dr Orla Flynn, President | Atlantic Technological University

Peter Osborne, Chair | Integrated Education Fund

Joel Keys, Activist

2.00pm KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Tim O'Connor, Retired Senior Diplomat & Civil Servant

2.45pm COFFEE BREAK

3.15pm PANEL 3 - *Generously supported by Institute of Public Health*

CHAIR: **Marie-Louise Connolly**, Health Correspondent | BBC Northern Ireland

Prof Deirdre Heenan, Professor of Social Policy | Ulster University

Dr Ann Nolan, Assistant Professor | Trinity College Dublin

Joanne Vance, MSc, Director | Community Development and Health Network

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4.15pm **PANEL 4 - *Generously supported by Ibec's 'For Peace + Prosperity' Campaign***

CHAIR: **David Sterling**, Former Head of Northern Ireland Civil Service & CCBS Board Member

Sharon Haughey-Grimley, Volunteer Development and Policy Lead | Ulster GAA

Pamela Arthurs, Chief Executive | East Border Region

Joe O'Toole, Teacher, Trade Unionist & Politician

Michael D'Arcy, Senior Research Associate | Centre for Cross Border Studies

5.15pm **CLOSE**

Dr Anthony Soares, Director | Centre for Cross Border Studies

6.00pm **RECEPTION AND JOURNAL LAUNCH**

Generously supported by Dublin City University & Queen's University Belfast

6.45pm **CONFERENCE DINNER - *Generously supported by Global Health Fusion***

Tim McGarry and Dr David Hume, Hosts | 'The Long and Short of It' Podcast



Conference Speakers



Peter Osborne

Peter has been involved in political engagement, policy, participation, dispute resolution and reconciliation for over 25 years. He leads Rubicon undertaking a number and range of audits, strategies, mediations and planning. Peter is Chair of the regional board of Remembering Srebrenica and a member of its UK Board and is Chair

of the Integrated Education Fund. Peter is currently a Board Member of the International Fund for Ireland and the Policing Board and Chair of the CCBS Board.

Peter was an elected representative for 12 years during which time he was a delegate to the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation and to the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement process. He was a Director of Extern and Extern Ireland and was a Northern Ireland board member of the BIG Lottery Fund. Peter founded the social enterprise, Landmark East; was a director of the Building Change Trust; led the founding of the Open Government Network; chaired the Community Relations Council; and chaired the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland.



Olwen Dawe

Olwen is a leading Policy Analyst and Consultant, with an established track record in developing and implementing equality, diversity and inclusion projects, and since 2017, a number of policies and strategies in the arts and culture sector. Notably, this has included the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon Equality, Human

Rights and Diversity Policy and the National Library of Ireland's Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Olwen is an Associate Consultant of the Institute of Public Administration, and guest lectures on their Professional Diploma in Human Rights and Equality. In 2021, Olwen was Project Advisor on both the Speak Up: A Call for Change and Dignity Matters reports on experiences of harmful workplace behaviour in the arts and legal professions.

Olwen holds a BA (Hons) in Industrial Relations, a Postgraduate Diploma in Economic Science, Public Policy Analysis, an MEconScience in Public Policy Analysis and a Professional Certificate in Governance. Olwen is a former Board Member of the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), the Lyric Theatre (Belfast), Poetry Ireland and CoisCéim Dance Theatre, and was

Chair of the Policy Research Committee of the National Campaign for the Arts (NCFA). She currently serves on the Board of Women's Aid and the Board of the Centre for Cross Border Studies.



Ailbhe Smyth

Ailbhe Smyth was the founding Head of Women's Studies at University College Dublin and is a long-time feminist, LGBTIQ and socialist activist. Centrally involved in the Marriage Equality campaign, she also led the Coalition to Repeal the 8th Amendment, and was Co-Director of the Together for Yes national abortion referendum campaign in Ireland.

Currently, she is Chair of Women's Aid Ireland, and also of Ballyfermot STAR Addiction Services. She is a Director of Age Action Ireland and Patron of the Women's Collective Ireland (NCCWN). She was included on *Time Magazine's* list of the world's 100 most influential people in 2019 and recently received the Freedom of the City of Dublin.



Bronagh Hinds

Women's Coalition Co-Founder Bronagh Hinds was a negotiator of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. As Deputy Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission, she led on the Agreement's equality and good relations provisions. Since founding DemocraShe she has worked with political parties, the Assembly, local

government, government departments and civil society on women's leadership, equality and diversity, and policy and strategy development.

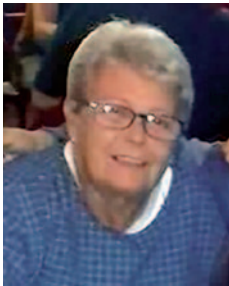
Beyond grassroots to political peacebuilding in N.Ireland, Bronagh engages in conflict resolution internationally. She has worked with political and civil actors from Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Iraq, Yemen, Colombia. Appointed UN senior expert on women and peace-building, she supported the Syrian Women's Advisory Board in UN-led political negotiations. On women, peace and security, she has facilitated learning for the Irish and other governments and multilateral bodies.

Previously, Bronagh was Director of the Ulster People's College, OxfamNI, GingerbreadNI and Chair of the NI Council for Voluntary

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Action. She co-founded the NI Women's Rights Movement, founded the Women's Platform and participates in women's policy and budget groups. She was a Senior Fellow in Queen's University Institute of Governance, held an honorary fellowship in its School of Law and was chair of UCD's Institute of British Irish Studies. She served as NI Commissioner on the UK Women's National Commission and a Local Government Staff Commissioner, and is an Independent Assessor for the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Bronagh has designed and delivered cross-border programmes and worked across the island of Ireland.



Eileen Weir

Eileen is a well-respected community development practitioner with extensive experience in building community capacity, supporting community cohesion and strategic community development. Eileen has project managed the design, implementation, and evaluation of a

broad range of community development programmes.

Eileen has been involved in community development practice for most of her working life, using a Community Development approach in her community relations work, with the aim of empowering communities to identify their needs and to be proactive in addressing these needs. By using this approach, a sense of ownership is secured.

Eileen is currently employed by Shankill Women's Centre as the Greater North Belfast Women's Network Co-Ordinator funded by the Community Relations Council and TEO/North Belfast Good Relations Programme. She has also worked to establish neighbourhood networks to enable the groups to meet, share information and build capacity.

Eileen also works within West Belfast with a wide range of community organisations and women's groups and is currently working towards creating a West Belfast Women's Network.

Throughout her work Eileen has undertaken training needs analyses. This process entailed organising focus groups of users to discuss what they felt were their own personal ambitions in terms of education and training and matching these to available resources or finding other resources to meet needs.

Eileen is also a fully qualified STEPS practitioner, accredited by the Pacific Institute. STEPS is a personal development programme delivered in a group setting with a qualified facilitator who helps participants to co-create their learning through interactive discussions and personal reflection, whilst utilising a wide variety of learning styles. Eileen has delivered the programme to a wide range of groups across Belfast, including Rathcoole.

Eileen's unbiased approach through her community development work has helped her to reach out to various communities and build relationships and networks throughout the Island of Ireland.

In 2018 Eileen received two prestigious awards the first presented by CRC Community Relations Council "Exceptional Achievement Award" and the second the "McCluskey Civil Rights Award" for her role in Human Rights, Civil Rights and Peace Building activities. Eileen is currently a member of the Board of the Centre for Cross Border Studies.



Colin Davidson

Colin Davidson is a contemporary artist, living and working near Belfast, Northern Ireland. Since graduating in 1991 from the University of Ulster with a first-class honours degree, he has structured his practice in themes, and since 2010 his focus has been on painting grand scale portraits, which have won widespread recognition and

many international awards. As well as numerous commissions, Colin's portrait sitters have included Brad Pitt, Ed Sheeran, Liam Neeson, Brian Friel, Sir Kenneth Branagh, Christy Moore, Dame Mary Peters, Gary Lightbody, Marketa Irglova, Glen Hansard, Mark Knopfler and Seamus Heaney. His work is held in many public and corporate collections worldwide, including Queen's University Belfast, the Ulster Museum (Belfast), Standard Life (London), the National Gallery of Ireland (Dublin), the Standard Chartered Bank of Asia, the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery (Washington DC) and the National Portrait Gallery, (London).

Colin's recent exhibition of portrait paintings, entitled 'Silent Testimony', reveals the stories of eighteen people who are connected by their individual experiences of loss through the Troubles - a turbulent 30-year period in Northern Ireland from the late 1960s onwards. This critically acclaimed body of work was on show at the Ulster Museum Belfast during 2015, before embarking on a tour which included the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, Dublin Castle and the United Nations NYC.

In December 2015 he was commissioned by TIME Magazine to paint the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, for the cover of its 'Person of the Year' issue. In 2016 Colin was invited to paint an official portrait of HM Queen Elizabeth II, which was unveiled later that year by The Queen in London. In 2019 his official portrait of President Bill Clinton was unveiled by the Past President in New York and in 2020 his portrait of Irish President Michael D Higgins was unveiled in Dublin.

In 2018, Colin was commissioned by Tourism NI to work on the design and branding for the 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' campaign.



Maureen O'Reilly

Maureen is an independent economist with more than 25 years experience across a range of area including policy evaluation, economic impact assessment, cost benefit analysis, economic appraisal, strategy, briefing, research and statistical analysis. She was previously Senior Research Economist with the Economic

Research Institute for Northern Ireland (ERINI). Prior to this she headed up the Policy Evaluation Unit at the Northern Ireland Economic Research Centre (NIERC). She was an Associate Lecturer in Economics with the Open University from 2003 to 2009. She now heads up her own consultancy company.

Maureen acts as economist for the NI Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which includes briefing, policy formulation, consultation submissions along with responsibility for the Chamber's Quarterly Economic Survey (QES). She is an Economic Associate with Pro Bono Economics in London, which helps charities and social enterprises improve their impact and value. Her role involves working with volunteer economists, managing and advising on impact assessment, data advice and advocacy research on behalf of UK and locally based charities. She is an Associate with the Public Policy Advisors Network in Ireland and writes regular features on local government in Northern Ireland for the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), a local authority membership organisation representing local government in the UK, Ireland and Australia. She is also a Board Member of Enterprise Northern Ireland which represents the interests of local enterprise agencies and lobbies on behalf of small business, and she is a Senior Research Associate with the Centre for Cross Border Studies.

Maureen holds a First Class Honours degree in Economics and a Masters (with distinction) in Applied Economics. She also holds Professional 2 level examinations with Chartered Accountants Ireland and has a part completed PhD in Enterprise Economics (which she hopes to complete some day!).



Kyra Reynolds

Kyra Reynolds works on an International Fund for Ireland Peace Barrier's Programme at the Bogside and Brandywell Initiative. Her work focuses on building cross-community trust and understanding in the Bishop Street-Fountain interface, with the long term goal of removing physical and mental barriers between the communities.

Her work also recognises the interrelationship between socio-economic disadvantage and ongoing conflict legacy issues in interface areas. As such, her work also includes general

community development initiatives that aim to empower communities.

Kyra's background is academic. She completed her PhD in the conflict and peacebuilding (focusing on Israel-Palestine) in 2017. Recognising the need for a grassroots, bottom-up approach to tackling such issues and wanting to make some sort of impact at home in Northern Ireland, she entered the community sector here in 2019.



Dr Orla Flynn

Dr Orla Flynn was appointed inaugural President of Atlantic Technological University in April 2022, having served two years as President of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. Prior to this Dr Flynn was Vice President for External Affairs at Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) for six years, and previous academic leadership roles in CIT

included Head of CIT Crawford College of Art & Design and Head of School of Humanities.

Dr Flynn commenced her academic career as a Lecturer in Computer Science, holding undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in Mathematical Physics and Computer Science from University College Cork, an MA in Management in Education from Waterford Institute of Technology, and a PhD from the Kemmy Business School at the University of Limerick. She is a current Director on the Board of HEANet and has previously held Director positions on both Cork and Galway Chambers of Commerce.



Joel Keys

Joel Keys is an activist from Belfast who regularly comments on the future of Unionism and the issues important to young people in his community. He is a member of the Unionist Youth Network which aims to create an 'open space for young Unionist opinion'. He has appeared regularly in the media being featured by a range of outlets.

Joel is a Rising Leaders Fellow at the Aspen Institute.

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Marie-Louise Connolly

BBC Northern Ireland's Health Correspondent, Marie-Louise Connolly, has been at the forefront of health and social care news since 2009. Most recently and significantly, Marie-Louise reported daily on coronavirus and has covered a myriad of issues, from women's heart health, cervical smears, special investigations

into Muckamore Abbey Hospital, the Neurology Inquiry, Mesh implants for men and women, the Bracca1 cancer gene, mental health and many more. She also has a special interest in menopause health having spoken publicly of her own experience.



Prof Deirdre Heenan

Professor Deirdre Heenan is a Professor of Social Policy at Ulster University. She is a senior associate at Nuffield Trust. She has published widely on health and social care. Her particular interests are integrated health care systems and collaboration. She is currently the Northern Ireland lead in a £15 million UK Social Care project.



Dr Ann Nolan

Dr Ann Nolan is an Assistant Professor in Social Policy at Trinity College Dublin, with a research and teaching portfolio in global health. Ann's research interests are in global health; the politics of health; HIV, sexual, reproductive health and rights, and health equity.



Joanne Vance

Belfast-born Joanne is Director of the Community Development and Health Network (CDHN) based in Newry. Founded in 1994 by community health workers in Northern Ireland's most disadvantaged areas, the organisation now boasts 2,300 members. CDHN addresses health and poverty issues in partnership with communities and

decision makers to combat health inequalities for a better quality of life.

Skilled in community development, health promotion, social research and evaluation, Joanne enjoys collaborating with multi-disciplinary teams, to showcase co-design and community-based research for evidence-driven prevention initiatives in local settings.

She was co-investigator and delivery lead on *We Can Quit* (WCQ2), empowering women in disadvantaged Irish communities to quit smoking.

Joanne represents CDHN on the Integrated Care System NI's Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Workstream and Strategic Outcome's Workstream

She is the Independent Chairperson of Mid and East Antrim Partnership's IMPACT Agewell Strategic Hub, a community-led cross-sectoral partnership enhancing older people's health and social wellbeing.



Tim O'Connor

Tim O'Connor is a retired Senior Diplomat at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and a former Secretary General to the President. Most of his DFA career was spent working on the Northern Ireland Peace Process. He was part of the Irish Government Delegation in the Talks that led to the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) in April

1998. Subsequently he helped negotiate the Supplementary Agreement between the Irish and UK Governments establishing the Cross Border Bodies under the GFA. In December 1999, he was appointed the inaugural Southern Joint Secretary of the North/South Ministerial Council in Armagh, a post he held until 2005, when he was appointed Ireland's Consul General to New York. He was Secretary General to the President from 2007 to 2010.

Since retirement from the Civil Service in 2010, he has combined running his own advisory business with voluntary work. In 2017 he was appointed the Irish Government Representative on the Independent Reporting Commission on Paramilitarism, a position he still holds.

Tim has Honorary Doctorates from NUI Maynooth, UCD, Quinnipiac University (Connecticut USA), and Ulster University and is an Honorary Professor of Practice at Queen's University Belfast.



David Sterling

David spent his career in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) working in a variety of roles before being promoted Head of the NICS in June 2017.

In that role he faced the challenge of delivering public services in the absence of ministers, preparing for

Brexit, facilitating the resumption of devolved government in early January 2020 and dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic.



He retired from the NICS in August 2020 and is currently the Chair of Northern Ireland Screen and the Chief Executives' Forum in Northern Ireland. He is also a Board Member of the Irish Times Trust and a number of charities: Ulster Wildlife, the Centre for Cross Border Studies and Women in Business NI.



Sharon Haughey - Grimley

Sharon leads out on Volunteer Development and Policy at Ulster GAA, supporting volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge to enable GAA clubs across Ulster to provide outstanding services and facilities in their local communities.

She has developed a prestigious Young Leaders Programme which develops skills and development of young Gaels encouraging young players and volunteers to play a greater role in administration of the the GAA within their communities. She was also instrumental in Ulster GAA becoming a delivery partner of the Joint Initiative between Duke of Edinburgh and Gaisce - The President's Award.

She has worked with Ulster GAA for 15 years and believes her work allows her to help build better, stronger communities across Ulster with a focus on physical activity through Gael Games, civic involvement and peace building.

Sharon was elected councillor for the SDLP from 2005-2019, she announced that she would not seek re-election in 2019 as she was focussing on motherhood with 4 young boys. One of her proudest achievement was being Lord Mayor of Armagh City and District in 2012/13 and enjoyed celebrating all that was good across communities in Armagh.

Sharon has a long history in politics. She first came to prominence as a 14 year old school girl who wrote a letter to US President Bill Clinton, President Clinton read parts of her letters detailing her hopes for the future of Northern Ireland on his first ever visit in 1995 when he turned on the Belfast Christmas Lights.

Later Sharon introduced President Bill Clinton to her hometown Armagh in September 1998 at a Gathering for Peace. She struck up a friendship with the Clintons which has spanned across 25 years. Recently she hosted a conversation with Hillary Clinton on behalf of the Washington Ireland Programme at Custom House Square in Belfast as part of the Good Friday Agreement 25th anniversary.

Selected as a young leader by the Washington Ireland Programme in 2003, she interned in Hillary Clinton's Senate Office. She travelled to America frequently achieving a Diploma in Strategic Perspectives in Governance and Growth from Harvard University and completed a programme for Government Media Spokesperson in Boston and San Francisco.

A First Class Graduate of Communications, Advertising and Marketing from the University of Ulster, Sharon was appointed to the Civic Forum for Northern Ireland when she was 19 years old.

She joined the SDLP in 1998 after being approached by the then leader John Hume and has been a member ever since. Over the years she held numerous high level positions within the party including the party's main decision making committee, General Council. She was also Press Office and Advisor to Leadership 2003-2009.

Currently Sharon resides in Granemore County Armagh with her husband Gerard and four boys aged 3, 5, 7 and 9. She enjoys the outdoors, and has a great love for animals especially her dog and her horse.

Although Sharon now enjoys life out of the public eye, she continues to be involved in her local community playing an instrumental role in community development.



Pamela Arthurs

Pamela Arthurs is Chief Executive of the East Border Region (EBR), a local authority led cross border organisation which covers six local authorities along the East Coast of Ireland. Formed in 1976, EBR aims to promote cross border economic development which benefits the people of the region. EBR currently financially manages €104m

INTERREG VA funding spread across a range of cross border projects and involving multiple project partners

As Chief Executive of EBR Ms Arthurs is responsible for Cross Border Policy, Strategy, Administrative and Financial matters. She is also an Executive member of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).



Joe O'Toole

Joe O'Toole was born and brought up in Dingle, County Kerry, He was a teacher for ten years and then a school principal in County Dublin. From 1990 to 2001, he was appointed General Secretary of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), and from 2001 to 2003, he was President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).

He was elected as an Independent member of Seanad Eireann in 1987 and served six terms until 2011. He has also served on the board of several charitable institutions.

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Michael D'Arcy

Michael is a business consultant and advisor who is also a researcher, interlocuter, speaker and writer who continues to play a central role in the development and evolution of an all-island economy, advocating how prosperity is needed to underpin peace and stability.

His work and experience which continues today includes advising and providing extensive all-island strategic research insights informed by being an early pioneer of North/South economic and business interaction both before and since the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and more recently the impact of Brexit on this process that has resulted in the 2023 EU/UK Windsor Framework agreement.

Currently Michael is a CCBS Senior Research Associate and has supported its work since its foundation. He produced its seminal publication: *Delivering a Prosperity Process: Opportunities in North/South Public Service Provision* (2012) and was a Panelist at its 20th Anniversary Conference where his remarks considered: 'The all island economy and the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, past present and future'. He has contributed articles to the CCBS Journal including its 2019 Special Edition (Vol 14) on 'Sir George Quigley, the island Economy and Brexit' and in 2020 presented the 5th Annual Sir George Quigley Memorial Lecture, 'Re-imagining the island economy in the aftermath of the Covid 19 crisis and the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol', which was the first of the series to be delivered online.

The 2023 CCBS Journal also features his article on 'Pre-1998 Agreement: Laying Foundations for Economic Achievements in North-South Businesses' and last May he gave a response paper at the CCBS's important seminar in NI Executive's Brussels on *What the Windsor Framework/Protocol will mean in practice for the institutions of government in Northern Ireland?*

He is currently also independent advisor to the Ibec/CBI Joint Business Council (JBC) and was production coordinator of their 'Business on a Connected Island' (2018) and 'Sustaining the Mutual Benefits of All-island Business' (2022) Reports along with supporting Ibec's 'for Peace + Prosperity' campaign to mark this year's 25th Anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

Michael is an active member of the Steering Group for a groundbreaking macro-economic Research Programme for Northern Ireland (2022 – 2025) led by Ireland's Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and the UK's National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR), is an Advisor to the Leadership Programme of The Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation and supports the work of the John and Pat Hume Foundation. Amongst publications for others, he co-authored 'The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, the island of Ireland economy and Brexit' (2018) a Brexit Briefing Note for the British and Royal Irish Academies whose citations include from Oxford University.

In addition, Michael is a leading economic policy advisor to national and international state, semi-state and commercial organisations and institutions and has been actively involved in regulatory reform at regional, all-island, EU and international level throughout a successful career spanning over 40 years, serving on Boards, consultative committees, and all island bodies.



Dr Anthony Soares

Dr Anthony Soares is Director of the Centre for Cross Border Studies. His role includes leading in the development and advocacy of policies at regional, national and European levels that support sustainable cross-border and transnational cooperation. This has increasingly meant coordinating CCBS's responses to the

UK's referendum on EU membership and its aftermath, publishing Briefing Papers and reports, submitting evidence to parliamentary committees in both Westminster and Dublin, and consulting with a range of political representatives and organisations on the island of Ireland, Great Britain and in Europe.



Tim McGarry and Dr David Hume

Could Partition Have Been Prevented?

A 6 foot four lapsed Catholic and comedian debates the creation of Northern Ireland with an Orangeman, historian and broadcaster.

Tim McGarry and Doctor David Hume are used to arguing about Irish history on their long-running and award-winning BBC Radio Ulster series *The Long and the Short of It*. Tim and David bring a unique approach to Irish history. They come from very different backgrounds but they like to discuss, debate, argue and also have a few laughs.

On 14th September they'll be asking if Partition could have been avoided. David thinks that Partition was inevitable from as far back as the 1880s but Tim thinks it could and should have been avoided and that Northern Ireland only came about as a result of political failure and intransigence.

There will be lively debate, a wee bit of stand-up comedy, history, politics, and at the end of it, we'll all still be friends...hopefully.

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CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES

39 Abbey Street, Armagh BT61 7EB

crossborder@qub.ac.uk

www.crossborder.ie