

Making It Home – Documentary Film

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Making It Home – Documentary Film

1.1 Abstract

In the run-up to the centenary of the end of World War One, national initiatives provided funding to create commemorative community-based events. These events aimed to mark the passing of time by recognising and acknowledging WWI and its impact on communities across the United Kingdom. Funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund, this 67-minute film is the culmination of a participatory filmmaking project with rural communities in Northern Ireland that asked 'Can understanding a community's past enhance the present and make for a better future?' The project used a community-based participatory filmmaking approach to investigate the story behind troops returning from Flanders trenches to take up houses and land promised to them by Prime Minister David Lloyd George. One of the most extraordinary resettlement schemes was on an island in the middle of Lough Erne, in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. Twelve veterans were each allocated 40 acres and a house on Cleenish Island, accessible only by boat, and left to survive off the land with no gas, no electricity, shops or other utilities.



The research, in partnership with the Bellanaleck Local History Group, involved extensive filming on Cleenish Island examining the ruined houses, interviewing community members, soldier's descendants, a published military historian from Australia and a Flanders Government representative from Belgium. The research uncovered historical documents from the Public Records Office of NI and utilised archive images from the Imperial War Museum in London.



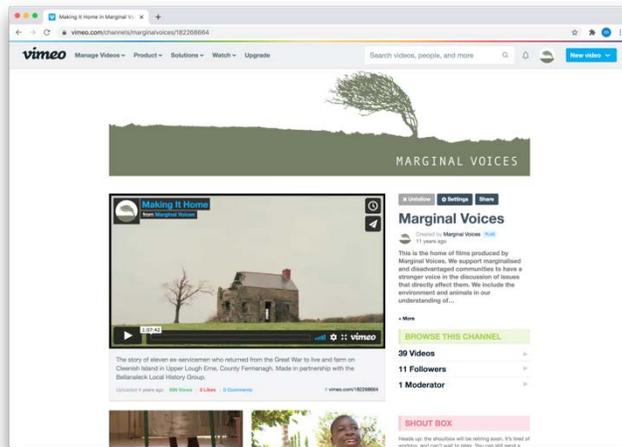
Impacts of Research

The film created positive change for participating communities by valuing local history, giving people a sense of belonging to the present whilst connecting to the past. Documenting First World War soldiers from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds in Northern Ireland fighting side

by side was especially important, providing historical evidence where political, religious and sectarian differences were no barrier to comradeship. Examples like this are very important to help Northern Irish communities continue progress towards a more peaceful and tolerant future. The film was premiered at The Ardhowen Theatre in Enniskillen, with subsequent screenings in rural community halls and online, totalling around 5,000 viewings.

(<https://vimeo.com/channels/marginalvoices/182268664>)

1.2 Online Distribution through Marginal Voices Website



1.3 Ardhowen Theatre Screening, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh

