

MEDIA RELEASE

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Pupils celebrate its International Women's Day at Titanic Belfast

Over 150 young women gathered, alongside industry leaders, at Titanic Belfast's annual International Women's Day (8th March) celebrations, which was sponsored by Titanic Foundation.

This is the third time Titanic Belfast has hosted 'Inspire' celebrations which aims to inspire young women to be leaders within their own spheres of influence and to contribute to the advancement of women around the world.

The event, which is now an established event on the Titanic Belfast calendar, has had significant speakers over the years, ranging from students, achievers in business to charity activists, including young Apprentice star Maria Doran as well as former First Citizen of Belfast and MP Naomi Long.

This year, pupils were introduced to UTV's Denise Watson, Magda Ruskowska-Cieslak, Programme Director - Habitat for Humanity Poland, Sara Booth, Women's Football Coordinator at the Irish Football Association, Linda Irvine, Irish Language Development Officer in East Belfast and Katie Richardson, singer and body image advocate.

Each spoke to the pupils around International Women's Day's theme 'Pledge for Parity' and encouraged effective action for advancing and recognising women and greater equality.

Siobhán McCartney, Titanic Belfast's Learning and Outreach Manager, commented, "We are delighted to host our third Inspire Conference to mark International Women's Day! Over the years, with sponsor, Titanic Foundation, we have now welcomed over 400 young women from over schools and colleges across Northern Ireland! At Titanic Belfast, we are proud and passionate about education outside the classroom and hope that this event has sparked new ideas, enterprise and passion amongst young women who can now inspire to be leaders in their own spheres and contribute to the advancement of women locally and nationally!"

Kerrie Sweeney, Chief Executive of Titanic Foundation Limited, event sponsor and the charity set-up to oversee the development of Titanic Belfast and who preserve Belfast's maritime and industrial heritage, said: "We are delighted to sponsor and open the Inspire conference. This year's theme is 'Pledge for Parity' and we want to encourage and help women and girls achieve their ambitions, each of us can be a leader within our own homes, schools, workplaces and communities and we can all commit to doing our part. This year's event has been another resounding success."

In addition to the Inspire Conference, Titanic Belfast will host a community exhibition from 8th March to 31st March, illustrating impressions of gender parity.

The event is just one of Titanic Belfast's Learning team's offering. Its education programme is recognised as a leading learning resource nationally and has welcomed over 90,000 participants since opening in 2012. It now offers a total of eight workshops and two guided tours and was recently awarded the prestigious Sandford Award for Heritage Education 2015, joining leading historic houses, museums, galleries, such as Hampton Court Palace, Brunel's SS Great Britain in Bristol and Edinburgh Castle.

Titanic Belfast's Learning Programme is supported by the Survitec Group, a leading manufacturer of marine, defense and aerospace survival technology. It has been working with Titanic Belfast as its education partner since 2014. For more information on Learning at Titanic Belfast, visit www.titanicbelfast.com/learning.

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Notes to Editors

About Titanic Belfast

Titanic Belfast is an iconic six-floor building featuring nine interpretive and interactive galleries that explore the sights, sounds, smells and stories of Titanic, as well as the City and people which made her. It is the World's Largest Titanic exhibition.

The building houses temporary exhibits, a banqueting suite, education and community facilities, catering and retail space, and a basement car park. Visitors learn about the construction of RMS Titanic and the wide and rich story of Northern Ireland's industrial and maritime heritage. Supported by the Northern Ireland Executive, Titanic Belfast is a unique public/private partnership funded by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour and Titanic Quarter Ltd. It is operated by Titanic Belfast Ltd and owned by the Titanic Foundation Ltd. For more information, please visit: www.titanicbelfast.com.

About Titanic Foundation Limited

Titanic Foundation Limited (TFL) is a registered charity, set up to educate the public on Belfast's industrial and maritime heritage, past, present and future. Titanic Foundation's ambition is to create a dynamic maritime destination where preservation of heritage complements regeneration and where public realm, events and amenities attract, engage and connects everyone in Belfast to Titanic's narrative - human endeavour, pride, inspiration and innovation. To date TFL has delivered Titanic Belfast and is currently progressing the restoration of the former Harland & Wolff Drawing Offices and Headquarters Building as a heritage centre and boutique hotel. As part of Titanic Foundation's remit to protect and promote the maritime and industrial heritage of Belfast we have taken on ownership of the SS Nomadic from April 2015. www.titanic-foundation.org.

Titanic Belfast's Education Programme

Titanic Belfast offers eight workshops for Education Groups.

My Granda's Piece Tin is a special programme for 6-to-8 year olds which looks at life for young apprentices at Harland and Wolff during the 1940 to 1970 era. The children take a one-hour workshop that looks at the lunch break in the yard; the contents of the men's "piece tins" and the games they played. The second half of the programme is a living history tour of some of the galleries where, dressed like an apprentice and guided by an apprentices' supervisor, they hear stories, sing and then cheer as Olympic is launched.

Dit and Dah is a workshop that looks at long range communication methods and is most appropriate for 8-to-12 year olds. There are three components to the workshop; an introductory, information based presentation, a practical activity based session where the pupils try three communication methods (Morse code, semaphore and signal flags) and then a plenary activity in the form of a strengths and weaknesses analysis of the methods they tried.

The Panel is aimed at secondary aged students and the delivery can be adjusted to suit 11-14 year olds right up to 18 year olds. Students are given access to primary source material in the form of excerpts from the Titanic inquiry testimonies. They must decipher the archaic and, at times, legalistic language and use active learning techniques to work out what the witnesses feel went wrong. They then role play as members of a board of inquiry advisory panel giving advice to the legislative bodies of 1912 who must write new laws to help prevent the tragedy ever happening again.

Dipping Your Toe is a workshop suitable for students aged 8-14 years old and is an introduction to Ocean Literacy which will encourage them to think proactively about the wider world around us. Participants will find out about the importance and operation of our oceans, how we negatively impact on them and what we can do as individuals to protect them for the future.

Exploring the Depths will allow pupils to dive deep into the ocean to uncover hidden shipwrecks and discover the world of modern ocean exploration. Using our unique interactive learning environment pupils will discover the zones of the ocean and some of the specialised creatures that live there. Pupils, aged 8 -14, will come away with a new appreciation and respect for our oceans, and will be inspired by the future of ocean exploration and scientific research.

From White Star to Five Star gives students an opportunity to meet Titanic Belfast's crew and ask questions about Northern Ireland's first ever 5 Star tourist attraction. It is suitable for students studying Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management from GCSE to Foundation Degree Level.

Abandon Ship has been designed to provide an opportunity for pupils to further develop important transferable skills in communication, problem-solving and decision-making as well as promoting self-confidence, self-esteem, co-operation and teamwork. The workshop is based around the scenario of being the crew of 3 yachts which collide with an iceberg and must abandon ship into the liferafts (Actual liferafts supplied by Survitec Ltd).

New Beginnings, takes place on SS Nomadic and is designed for KS2 pupils, and concentrates on its and Titanic's links with emigration and the story of 20th century emigration from Europe, particularly Ireland. It draws of the emotions of men, women and children who made the brave decision to leave all they knew behind.

The Learning pages on www.titanicbelfast.com contains tailored information for teachers. We provide thorough logistical information about planning a visit, what happens while with us, and a risk assessment document that is suitable for education group leaders.

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