



## Media Release

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# 30 Things to Discover About The Home of The Titanic As it Celebrates the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Discovery of the Famous Ship

Although the Titanic lies in 13,000 feet of water, the enduring story still captures minds and hearts throughout the world. To mark the anniversary, when a team led by American oceanographer Dr. Robert Ballard and French diving engineer Jean-Louis Michel discovered the world's most famous ship's final resting place, here are 30 things you may not know about the Titanic and its home – Titanic Belfast:

## The Ship Itself

1. Titanic's design was conceived over a glass of wine and fine food! Lord Pirrie and J. Bruce Ismay decided speed would be balanced with quality of accommodation. It is rumoured that when Pirrie enquired as to the length of the ship, Ismay replied, glass of wine in hand, "build me a stable ship that will not disturb the sediment in these fine wines."
2. Titanic (271m) was long enough to span three tempestuous Atlantic Ocean wave crests.
3. Due to the size of the Olympic-class ships, in which Titanic was one of three, the shipyard, Harland and Wolff in Belfast had to prepare for two years to be able to build them!
4. At the time, Belfast was the fastest growing city in the British Empire, it was the linen and ropework capital, with the largest ship building firm in the world. Evidence of this can still be seen throughout the city today.
5. The ship had three wheels for steering!
6. Titanic's funnels were wide enough to drive a train through!
7. Facilities on board included a gym, pool, Turkish bath, a kennel for first class dogs, and a squash court. The first class cabins on Titanic, where the same standard as hotel cabins, second class was as good as first class on other ships.
8. The famous staircase, which was among the most luxurious appointments on the ship, was inspired by the staircase at Belfast City Hall, which can still be visited today.
9. Titanic was stocked with literally tons of food and drink – including 40,000 eggs and 15,000 bottles of ale!
10. Titanic was launched in 62 seconds on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1911. The Olympic, and the tender ships, Nomadic and Traffic left Belfast, drawing over 100,000 spectators and journalists travelling from London and America.
11. Titanic now lies 370 miles off the coast of Newfoundland, nearly two and a half miles (4000m) below sea level overlooking a small canyon below.

12. There is no light at this great depth and little life can be found. At Titanic Belfast, visitors can view Dr Ballard's high definition footage of what Titanic looks like today and can learn more about individual items in the wreckage using the interactive pods.

### **Titanic Belfast – the Home of the Titanic**

13. Titanic Belfast is built where the Titanic was designed and launched.
14. The Titanic and SS Nomadic have been re-united again in Belfast. Visitors can experience both the world's largest Titanic visitor experience together with the SS Nomadic, an authentic piece of Belfast's industrial heritage, as well as the award-winning Discovery Tour, which highlights the famous barrel-vaulted Harland & Wolff Drawing Offices, the slipways and the building's iconic structure for one price.
15. Titanic Belfast is the world's largest Titanic visitor experience.
16. It has welcomed approximately 2.5 million visitors from over 145 countries.
17. From HM Queen Elizabeth, Film director James Cameron, British Prime Minister David Cameron, Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Former United States Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton to Michael Buble have all visited Titanic Belfast.
18. It can hold over 3,547 visitors at any one time, the same number as the capacity of Titanic!
19. Titanic Belfast's overall shape represents the bow of the ship.
20. The hulls are the same height of Titanic from keel to Boat Deck!
21. 40,000 tons of concrete was used in Titanic Belfast's foundations, nearly the same as for Titanic.

### **What's new at Titanic Belfast**

22. The world-class exhibition, which has been described by the Prime Minister as 'absolutely brilliant' and 'magnificent and dramatic' by TITANIC movie director, James Cameron, has recently redeveloped three galleries, which capture the excitement of launch day, as well as the ship's maiden voyage. Utilising Pepper's Ghost illusion that was featured in the James Bond movie, Diamonds Are Forever, as well as fellow world class attractions such as the Haunted Mansion at Disneyland, Titanic Belfast recently introduced Fredrick Dent Ray, a dining room steward and survivor. Visitors will hear what it was like to work on board at the Palm Court Café.
23. At Titanic Belfast, guests are now transported onto Titanic's deck promenade as part of the experience. Guests can walk on deck, look out to sea, hear the ocean, hold onto the railings and feel the ships engines rumbling as if they were on the ship itself.
24. The last letter ever to be written on board the Titanic by Essex-born Esther Hart and her seven-year-old daughter Eva just eight hours before the ship hit an iceberg and sank in April 1912 is on display. It recently sold at auction for a world record sum of £119,000.
25. A note from the Titanic assistant ship's surgeon Dr John Simpson, which was believed to long-lost, is also on display at the exhibition.
26. Titanic Belfast is home to the historic plan, commissioned by the Board of Trade for the British inquiry, was designed and prepared by White Star Line architects. It is the second most expensive Titanic artefact in the world.

### **Outside Titanic Belfast**

27. It's not only the galleries that tell the story of the Titanic but the surrounding buildings. On the plaza surrounding the Titanic Belfast is one of the largest maps of the Northern Hemisphere at 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> and follows the route of the Titanic from Belfast.
28. The wooden benches encircling the building and are spaced in Morse code sequence. Moving clockwise around the plaza they read "DE (this is) MGY MGY MGY (Titanic's call sign) CQD CQD SOS SOS CQD" – the distress message that Titanic sent after hitting an iceberg.
29. On the slipways, there is life size plan of Titanic's Promenade Deck which is inlaid in white stone, where the ship would have been constructed, outlining where the liner's lifeboats and funnels and benches on board would have been.
30. The Slipways have its own Memorial garden, where four grass lawns alternate with timber decking to illustrate the proportion of those who lost their lives and lived from each of the passenger classes and crew.

To delve deeper, visit the home of the story - Titanic Belfast. The world-class exhibition is easily accessible from both George Best Belfast City Airport, which receives flights from Aer Lingus, Flybe, British Airways and CityWing from the UK and Paris amongst others, as well as Belfast International Airport, which receives flights from United Airlines, EasyJet and others from across Europe, the UK and USA. For more information, visit [www.titanicbelfast.com](http://www.titanicbelfast.com).

## **ENDS**

### **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.

#### **Useful links:**

Titanic Belfast: [www.titanicbelfast.com](http://www.titanicbelfast.com)

Belfast City Council: <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events/Event-36148.aspx>

Visit Belfast: <http://visit-belfast.com/>

Titanic Quarter: <http://www.titanic-quarter.com/news-events>

Northern Ireland Tourist Board: <http://www.nitb.com/>

Titanic Foundation Limited: <http://www.titanic-foundation.org/>

### **Additional Facts By Country**

## **Northern Ireland**

- Naval architect, Thomas Andrews was a Comber resident and a student at Royal Belfast Academical Institution (RBAI).
- Lord Pirrie called Ormiston House, which was sold for over £1.5m earlier this year, home.
- A note from the Titanic assistant ship's surgeon Dr John Simpson, which was believed to long-lost, is also on display at the exhibition. Dr Simpson is a relative of BBC Northern Ireland journalist– Mark Simpson (his great-grandfather's cousin)

## **Ireland**

- On April 11 1912, 113 people boarded Titanic at Queenstown near Cork. Only 40 Irish Titanic survivors eventually made it to America.

## **Germany**

- A Steiff Polar Bear, belonging to Douglas Spedden, survived the sinking of the Titanic. To help Douglas come to terms with what happened his mother wrote a book about the experience through the eyes of his teddy. The book 'Polar – The Titanic Bear' is still available today.

## **France**

- Marcelle Navratil, from France, was separated from her husband, did not know that her two young sons Michael and Edmond, were on Titanic with their father. He told passengers that their mother was dead, and when he went down with the ship, the boys were named 'The Titanic Orphans'. It was only by reading a French newspaper, she saw a picture of them and was able to reclaim them!
- The SS Nomadic, the tender ship, which ferried passengers from Cherbourg to Titanic, was a floating restaurant on the River Seine.
- In World War I, the SS Nomadic was a minesweeper, detonating mines along the French coast and in WWII she evacuated thousands of British and French soldiers out of Cherbourg, as the German army advanced.

## **America**

- Milton S. Hershey, founder of the North America's largest chocolate firm, was due to travel on Titanic but was needed home at an earlier date.
- Since opening in 2012, Titanic Belfast has welcomed approximately 60,000 American guests.

## **Canada**

- Canada had a strong role to play in recovering the bodies of those lost in the Titanic. White Star purchased plots in three cemeteries in Halifax, Fairview Lawn, Mount Olivet Catholic and the Baron de Hirsch cemeteries. White Star paid for these burials and a simple granite headstone for each of the 150 bodies that were not claimed by relatives.
- The crew from Mackey-Bennett were so moved by finding the body of a small boy, No.4, that they carried his coffin to Fairview Lawn Cemetery and paid for his headstone. His grave has become a symbol of all the young lives lost.

## **Australia**

- The Hawkesbury River Bridge was built by the Sir William Arrol, who built the gantry crane that built the Titanic.

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