

# ARDBOE HIGH CROSS





# ARDBOE HIGH CROSS

This educational comic book resource is part of an initiative to mark important historical sites in Mid-Ulster. Sitting on the western shore of Lough Neagh, Ardboe High Cross is one of the finest examples of a high cross still standing in Ulster.

Dating to around the 10th century, the cross is all that remains of a monastery once located on the site. Made of sandstone, the cross stands at 5.5 metres high and contains 22 separate sculpted panels portraying biblical stories.

The cross has been a popular site for pilgrims and visitors for centuries. You can visit too. Ardboe High Cross is a State Care Monument managed by the Department for Communities. It is free to visit and open year-round.

[www.midulstercouncil.org](http://www.midulstercouncil.org)



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council



LOTTERY FUNDED



Department for  
**Communities**  
[www.communities-ni.gov.uk](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

Comic developed by:



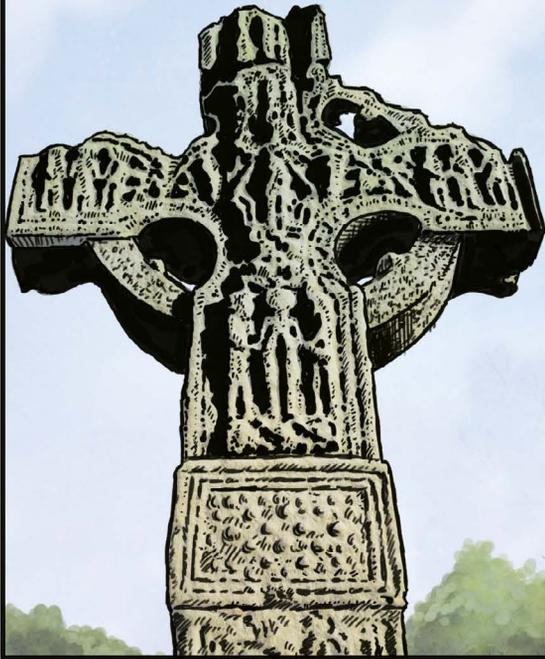
**nerve**  
centre

ARDBOE CROSS, PRESENT DAY.



THIS IRISH HIGH CROSS IS A STATE CARE MONUMENT.

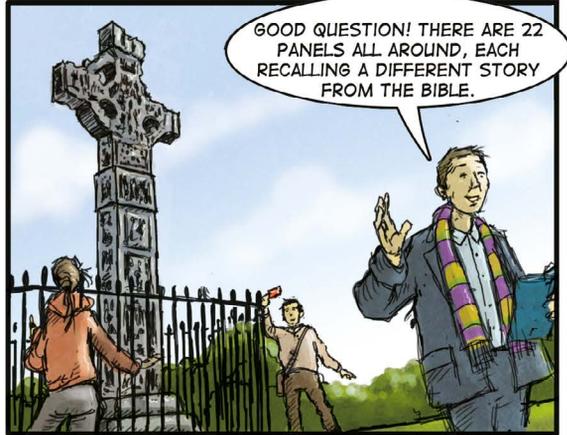
...AND, AT AROUND 18 FEET, IT'S ONE OF THE TALLEST CROSSES OF ITS KIND STILL STANDING IN NORTHERN IRELAND.



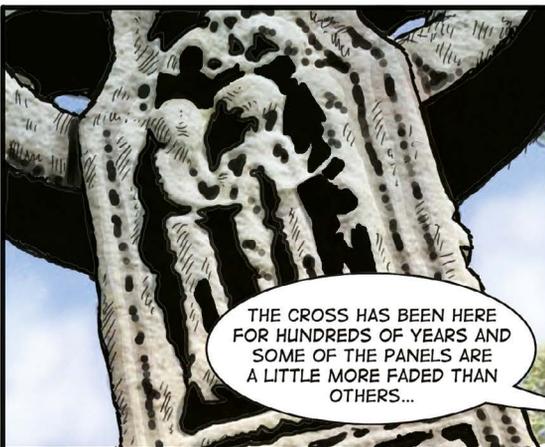
WHAT ARE ALL THE MARKINGS AROUND THE CROSS?



GOOD QUESTION! THERE ARE 22 PANELS ALL AROUND, EACH RECALLING A DIFFERENT STORY FROM THE BIBLE.



THE CROSS HAS BEEN HERE FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS AND SOME OF THE PANELS ARE A LITTLE MORE FADED THAN OTHERS...



...BUT THE CROSS IS JUST ONE STORY THAT THIS SITE HAS TO TELL...



THE SITE OF ARDBOE CROSS HAS LONG BEEN A CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.



A MONASTERY WAS ESTABLISHED ON THE SHORE OF LOUGH NEAGH IN THE 6TH CENTURY BY ST COLMAN MAC AED.

THE CROSS, WHICH STANDS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE GRAVEYARD, WAS CARVED IN THE 9TH OR 10TH CENTURY.



A FIRE DESTROYED THE MONASTERY AND ITS WOODEN STRUCTURES IN 1166.

HOWEVER, THE SITE CONTINUED TO BE USED AND LATER BECAME THE MAIN CHURCH IN A MEDIEVAL PARISH.

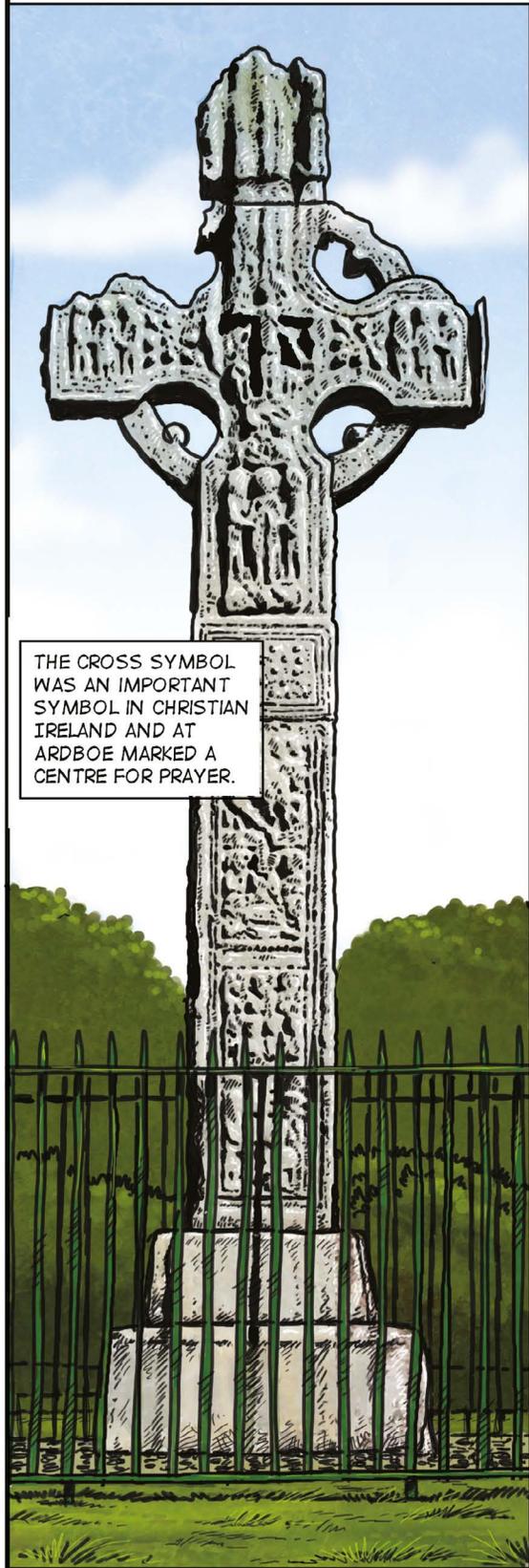


THE REMAINS OF A 17TH-CENTURY CHURCH CAN STILL BE FOUND IN THE GRAVEYARD AND IN A NEARBY FIELD IS A RUINED CHURCH KNOWN AS 'THE ABBEY'.

IT'S THE CROSS THAT HAS SURVIVED AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE SITE.



ALTHOUGH SLIGHTLY WEATHERED AND DAMAGED, THE CROSS IS STILL ONE OF THE BEST EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL EVENTS CARVED IN STONE.



THE CROSS SYMBOL WAS AN IMPORTANT SYMBOL IN CHRISTIAN IRELAND AND AT ARDBOE MARKED A CENTRE FOR PRAYER.

THERE ARE 22 PANELS AROUND THE CROSS, EACH TELLING A DIFFERENT STORY.

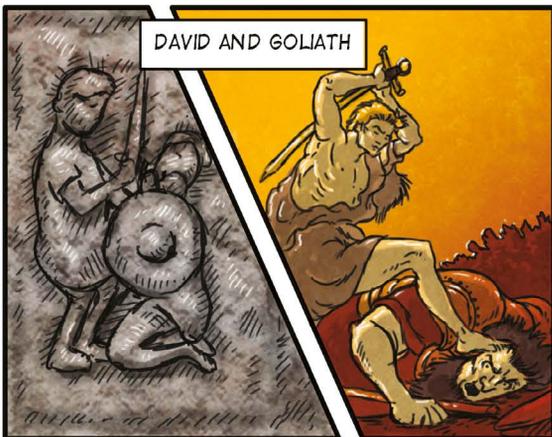
ADAM AND EVE



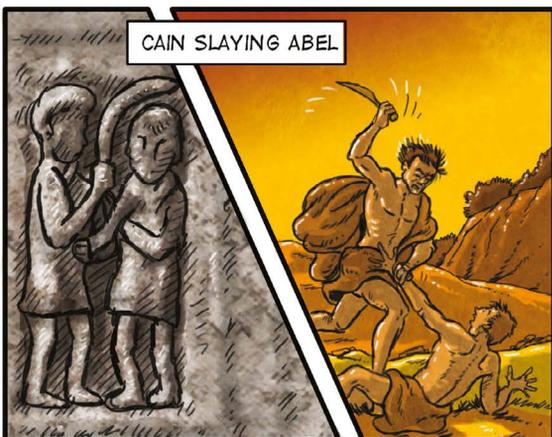
THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC



DAVID AND GOLIATH



CAIN SLAYING ABEL





THE CROSS AND THE SITE HAS LONG BEEN VIEWED AS IMPORTANT BY DIFFERENT CHRISTIAN GROUPS.



IN THE 18TH CENTURY, PEOPLE MADE PILGRIMAGES TO THE CROSS AND MOVED AROUND IT ON THEIR KNEES WHILE PRAYING.



EVEN THE WATER IN THE NEARBY LOUGH WAS THOUGHT TO HAVE HEALING POWERS.

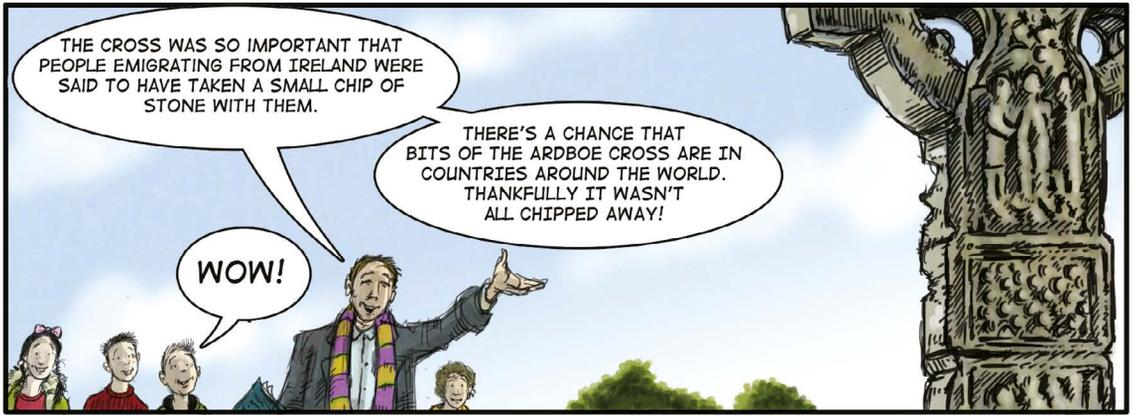
OVER TIME THE CROSS BECAME DAMAGED AS IT STOOD UP AGAINST THE ELEMENTS.



THE TOP STONE FELL IN 1817 AND THE UPPER PORTION, INCLUDING THE ARMS, FELL IN 1846.



COLONEL STEWART OF KILLYMOON CAREFULLY RESTORED THE CROSS TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE IN 1846.



# History of the Site

**Ardboe High Cross stands on the shore of Lough Neagh as a reminder of the significance of a site with a history stretching back over 1000 years.**

The cross is all that remains of a monastery built in the 6th century that was later destroyed in a fire. Yet afterwards, Ardboe remained an important centre, with many Christians making pilgrimages to the site and worshipping there.

Ardboe Cross is one of the largest high crosses still standing in Ireland at 5.5 metres tall. Although worn and damaged by the weather, the cross is a great example of figure carving that tells the story of significant biblical events.

## Did you know...

Local legend suggests the cross was built with the help of a magic cow that stepped out of Lough Neagh and provided workmen with cream, milk and butter for as long as they needed it.

The symbol of the cross continues to be an important feature in Christian society throughout Ireland.

22 panels on each of the four sides of the cross depict stories from the Bible including Old Testament scenes such as the temptation of Adam and Eve and Cain slaying Abel, as well as New Testament stories recalling the early life of Jesus Christ through to the crucifixion.

Ardboe was a centre for Christian worship and later became a medieval parish as evidenced by a 17th-century church in the nearby graveyard. Another ruined church known as 'The Abbey' can be found in a field to the north of the site.

The site was also important locally with people visiting a beech tree in the grounds of the graveyard that was said to have been blessed by a monk. Visitors would place a coin in the tree with a wish or a prayer for a cure. But the metal of the coins most likely killed the tree!



**Can you think of something you do to bring you luck?**

Although the cross may have faded over time, its significance continues to capture visitors to the shores of Lough Neagh.

## Visit the site today

**Ardboe High Cross is open to visitors year-round. View the cross, graveyard and surrounding church ruins and absorb the site's rich history.**

For further information please contact 028 8676 9949.





## Create a short film about Ardboe High Cross

Visit Ardboe High Cross, taking lots of pictures of the sculpted panels on all sides of the cross. Use video editing software (e.g. Moviemaker or iMovie) to create a short film that combines these images with text or a voiceover to describe what's happening in each of the panels.

### Key Stage 2 Curriculum Links

Curriculum Objectives	Mutual Understanding, Cultural Understanding, Spiritual Awareness
Cross Curricular Skills	Communication, Using ICT
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Managing Information, Being Creative, Working With Others
Areas of Learning	The Arts, The World Around Us, Language and Literacy, Religious Education



## Create your own comic about Ardboe High Cross

Create a one page comic depicting scenes on the Ardboe High Cross. Your comic page should have at least six panels. Draw the cross yourself or use comic creation software (e.g. Comic Life) to include photographs or images. Add a title and some text to explain what each panel is.

### Key Stage 2 Curriculum Links

Curriculum Objectives	Mutual Understanding, Cultural Understanding, Spiritual Awareness
Cross Curricular Skills	Communication, Using ICT
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Managing Information, Being Creative, Self-Management
Areas of Learning	The Arts, The World Around Us, Language and Literacy, Religious Education



## Create your own animation!

Download a suite of animation assets from the Burnavon Theatre website ([www.burnavon.com/education](http://www.burnavon.com/education)) and create an animation about Ardboe High Cross.

Downloadable designs include everything you will need to complete your story including artwork representing various parts of the Ardboe Cross.

Print, cut and arrange the 2D assets to create your own stop-motion film. Work in groups in your class to make a film that shows the creativity and storytelling power of the cross and its significance over time.

Add special effects, record your own audio and use text to complete your animation!

For helpful hints and advice on how to create stop-motion animation, download the Nerve Centre's free **'Creating Animation in the Classroom'** iBook for step-by-step instructions.

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