



RESEARCH TEAM

Sarah-Anne Buckley

John Cunningham
Elaine Feeney
Mary Cunningham
Miriam Haughton
Barry Houlihan
Lorna Farren

IMPACT STORIES

Tuam Oral History Project

University of Galway

The Tuam Mother and Baby Home was one of a number of such institutions established at the foundation of the Irish state. Publicly-funded and located in a former Workhouse building, it was under the management of the Bon Secours Sisters. Thousands of women and children passed through its doors until its eventual closure in 1961. In recent years, research by Catherine Corless drew attention to conditions in the institution and the sector generally, prompting considerable media coverage, which focused especially on high mortality rates and insensitive burial practices.

The key aim of the Tuam Oral History Project is to enable the survivors of the Tuam institution and their families to tell their own life stories, in the way that they want them to be told. In that regard, members of the project team will record and archive the histories and life stories of survivors and their families, as well as the memories of others connected in any way with the institution or with those who spent time there.

The Tuam Home Alliance/Tuam Survivors Network were integral throughout the lifecycle of the project. The impact pathway was always grounded in the principles of equity, with a particular emphasis on tackling polarization and ensuring collaboration and inclusivity in a contested space. As the archive being developed is a digital one, digitization is a feature of the work. Similarly, the health and well-being of survivors as well as researchers is central to the project's work and the provision of counselling has been key to the project. As impact activities the research team chose a podcast featuring three survivor stories, a special photo exhibition, a dram student performance piece, direct advocacy in parliamentary committees, and several other events.

"The research team believe that the research pathway they have created has been collaborative and impactful due to the engagement from its inception of survivors and their families. It is grounded in the principles of historical and transitional justice, and we are committed to this approach. We are committed to highlighting the importance of listening and acting on the views of those directly affected, always ensuring that empathy, dignity, and respect are core."

Do you want to know more about our story? [Click here!](#)