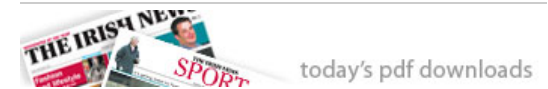


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Troubles museum proposals to tour

By Mary Flanigan and Michael Phoenix

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IDEAS WANTED: Alan Mc Bride, chairman of The Living Memorial sub-group, and Kate Turner, coordinator of Healing Through Rememberance, discuss ideas received on what form a Living Memorial Museum to the conflict in Northern Ireland should take PICTURE: Declan Roughan

PROPOSALS for the first Troubles museum include a 'greenhouse of re-flection' and an 'underwater museum,' it was announced yesterday.

The Healing Through Remembering group, which includes former republican and loyalist paramilitaries, security force members and victims' families, have published proposals for a Living Memorial Museum to mark the suffering of the Troubles.

The group has spent the past two years seeking ideas as to how a museum to commemorate the conflict could be created.

Among the submissions put forward are a greenhouse of reflection, a glass tower, an underwater museum, a peace garden and a garden of remembrance.

All the proposals have been put together in a book which will tour the north allowing people to have a say on what should be the final choice.

Welcoming the wide range of ideas, report author Louise Purbrick said: "It was completely open; there were no prerequisites for entry, no questions that had to be answered and no criteria to be addressed.

"We received written and oral submissions, drawings and sketches, photos and poetry, letters and statements, as well as multi-media submissions such as DVDs and CD-Roms.

“Submissions came from people of all backgrounds, each with an opinion to express on how the conflict should be remembered.”

Alan McBride, whose wife Sharon was killed in the IRA bombing of a Shankill fish shop, praised the wide range of people who took part in the project.

“When I first encountered this group I was working with young people and one of the biggest problems we faced was a lack of proper resources,” he said.

“There’s nothing decided as to what the museum will be like. It could be a place for people to share their experiences, it could be interactive, but the one thing it should say is that this should never happen again.

“The ideas came from all sorts of people, from a wee woman who lost her husband during the Troubles to well known artists.

“The important thing was that there was no hierarchy of victims, each idea has been given the same space and consideration in the book.

“It is up to the public to decide what they think now.”

Former hunger striker Laurence McKeown welcomed the wide range of views submitted to the group.

“The important thing is that this whole process is inclusive and does not impose one idea over the other,” he said.

we remember what was a deeply unfortunate conflict for all sides.”