



Presentation to V1 Jornades de Pedagogia de Patrimoni Monumental

Eglinton Castle

1 Formal Aspects

The presentation will be made by:

John Travers, Director of Education, North Ayrshire Council
Norma McCrone, Head of Arts & Culture, North Ayrshire Council
Jacqueline McLaren, Depute Head Teacher, Lawthorn Primary School

The presenters will speak in Spanish and English and will use a DVD with a commentary in Catalan.

An English translation of the script of the DVD can be made available.

2 Context

The presentation is of a project involving staff at Eglinton Country Park and Lawthorn Primary School, Irvine, North Ayrshire. Lawthorn Primary is a recently built school with nearly 400 pupils aged from 5 to 12 and a pre-school nursery with 65 4 year olds. Lawthorn Primary is also involved in a Comenius project and has a partner school in Riudecols, Tarragona.

The pupils participating in the Eglinton Castle project are in Primary 7 in the Scottish system and are around 11 years of age. All pupils at Lawthorn Primary School study local history including Eglinton Castle at some point during their course. The project involves preparation in school, a visit to Eglinton Castle, a visit to the Council Headquarters to see the Eglinton Trophy and follow up activity in school. Teachers use a variety of materials including worksheets and computer activities.

3 Subject

The subject of the presentation is Eglinton Castle. The ruins of Eglinton Castle now stand in Eglinton Country Park, near Irvine.

The castle was once the home of the Montgomerie family who were Earls of Eglinton and, for nearly 800 years, one of the most powerful families in Scotland. They took part in many conflicts during these centuries, sometimes on the side of the king, sometimes on the side of rebels, and sometimes secretly supporting both sides at the same time.

The Earls of Eglinton are now best known for an event which they organised in 1839. This was the Eglinton Tournament, probably the last great jousting tournament in Europe. It is also regarded as the last attempt to bring back the values of feudalism and the middle ages in the 19th century. Some say it was a great success, others call it a terrible failure. It brought financial ruin to the Earl of Eglinton who had to sell off his estate to pay his debts.

An important reminder of the Eglinton Tournament is the Eglinton Trophy, a magnificent silver trophy which is now owned by North Ayrshire Council.

Pupils from many North Ayrshire schools study the history of Eglinton Castle, the Tournament and the Eglinton Trophy.

4 Conclusions

The project is designed to inform pupils about an important local monument and to capture their interest by focussing on a specific event, in this case the Eglinton Tournament.