

GLENS OF ANTRIM AND CARRICKFERGUS HISTORICAL SOCIETIES



BALLYPATRICK COURT TOMB (OR HORNED CAIRN)

The tomb is situated in Ballypatrick Forest Park and can be accessed from the A2, at the entrance between Cushendall and Ballycastle, just to the north of Loughareema (“Vanishing Lake”). The actual site is well signposted from the car park.

This is County Antrim’s only double court tomb. Court tombs of this type remained in common usage until about the start of the Bronze Age, c2200 BC. This Neolithic site (from the latter part of the Stone Age) site is heavily overgrown on top of peat, thick mosses with numerous tall weeds and grasses. As can be seen, the stones are in a more ruinous state in the South East Grave than the North West Grave. The complex consists of double court horned cairns that are set back to back meaning that both courts face outward. The view on the photograph is through the NW grave looking towards the SE grave. The chambers served as tombs and the courtyards were used for ritual functions. Objects were often buried with the deceased as the first megalithic farmers of this time held a belief in the afterlife.

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