

HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE
THE CAVE HILL CONSERVATION



The White Stone of Cave Hill, Belfast

This basalt outcrop is a landmark situated on the southern slope of Cave Hill is visible from its southern aspect. It can be approached most easily from the car park off the B95.

The white Stone was first painted in 1941 by William Adair Caulfield, a postman who lived in Cave Hill Cottage at the top of the Upper Cave Hill Road. It is believed he was paid £5.00 by the War Department to keep it painted bright white so that it could be used as a marker by the many Allied aircraft flying across Belfast.

Over the intervening years the memory of why the stone was painted had begun to fade but interestingly, a vestige of the tradition remained, and many people painted it. It has been, in turn, orange, white, green, red, blue and even in 2014 pink (to mark the start in Belfast of the Giro d'Italia).

The true history of the stone came to light because of an overheard conversation. Two of our members were discussing how little we know about the stone on one of our public walks when a lady heard us and introduced herself as the granddaughter of William Adair Caulfield and she could supply background information.

Cormac Hamill