

Aspect One – Groomsport's sculpture



Aspect One by Ron Irvine



The plaque on the sculpture

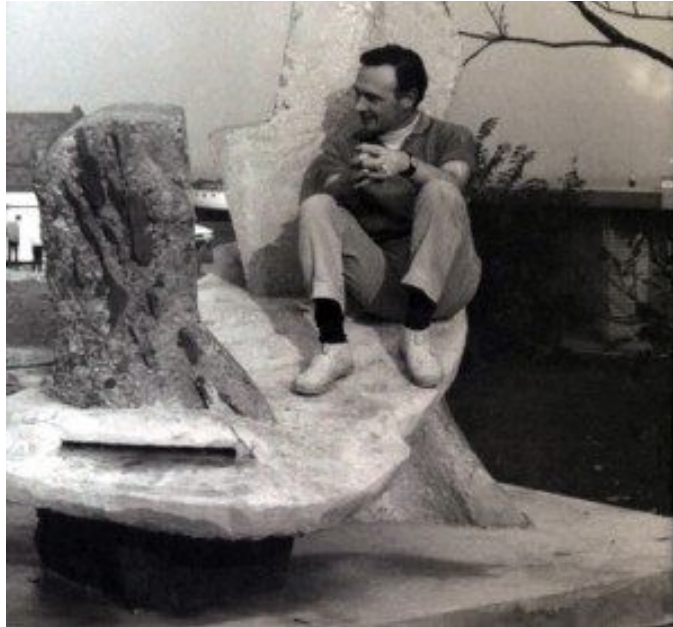
After the Cockle Row Cottages were saved from demolition in the 1960s, they were used, for many years, by Bangor Art Club, as a studio and exhibition space.

One of the founding members of the Bangor Art Club was **Ron Irvine**. He lived on the Groomsport Road near Dufferin Villas. He worked as an Art teacher, first in Belfast Boys Model School (in the 1960's) and later in Bangor Girls High School. Born in Newtownards, he would have been very familiar with the Groomsport area. Living in Ballyholme allowed Ron and his family to enjoy the pleasure of exploring Ballymacormick Point and the rocky path through Groomsport and on to Briggs Rock and Orlock.

In 1971 Bangor Borough Council commissioned him to create a piece of public art to enhance the grass area at Groomsport harbour. Ron wanted to create a piece that would endure the harsh seaside elements so he made it in concrete. He wanted people to gain an appreciation of the place by interpreting the work as they saw fit. His creation embodied the tactile, auditory and visual pleasure he had derived from Groomsport.

Ron had not worked in concrete before so this job was a real challenge and indeed he re-made it several times before he was satisfied. To allow free interpretation, he named it **“Aspect One”**

Everyone was meant to sit on it, climb up it, jump off it, do none of these – whatever “turned them on”! You can see Ron relaxing on Aspect One in the photograph.



The artist, Ron Irvine, sitting on Aspect One

Ron Irvine died in Kent in 2009 aged 79.

This extract from an email from Ron Irvine’s daughter in 2016 explains...

“Ron loved Groomsport and the wildness of the shoreline. We often walked from Bangor to Groomsport as a family, and when designing it Ron decided that the sculpture shouldn’t be something that people just looked at, but something to be enjoyed, like the shore and therefore it was important to him that everyone felt they could scramble over, play around and sit on the sculpture. Given the exposed position he made it out of concrete, wanting it to last and to reflect the ruggedness of the surrounding shore line. Concrete is a difficult material to work with, and it therefore took a long time to construct, particularly as Ron was a bit of a perfectionist. During the building process he was asked many times what it was called. In truth, I don’t think he ever intended to name it, wanting it to be whatever people saw, letting their imagination run free. There were many names, from the islands of the British Isles to my personal favourite Yogi Bear and Boo-Boo.”

John Crockard

2016