

# Annual Newsletter 2023

Association of Friends of Fermanagh County Museum



Mavis Thomson with Noelle McAlinden, Denise Ferran & Sinead Reilly

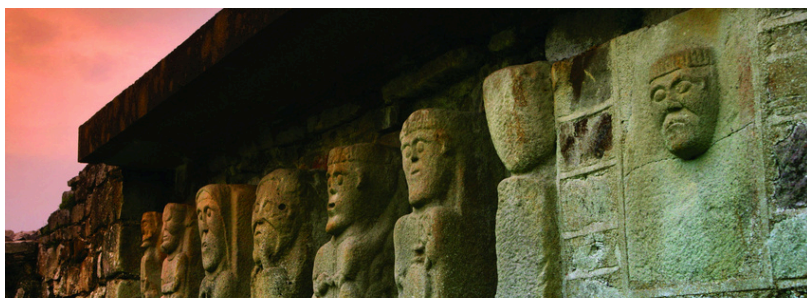


Their Majesties The King and Queen with Vice Chair of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Councillor Allan Rainey



The U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland for Economic Affairs, Joe Kennedy III

**83,679** people visited Enniskillen Castle; **8** exhibitions were opened; **6** talks were held; **6** trails were offered; **12** additional events organised; **9** public events hosted; **246** objects, documents & photographs were accessioned into our collections; **104** school visits & **75** general tours (school year).

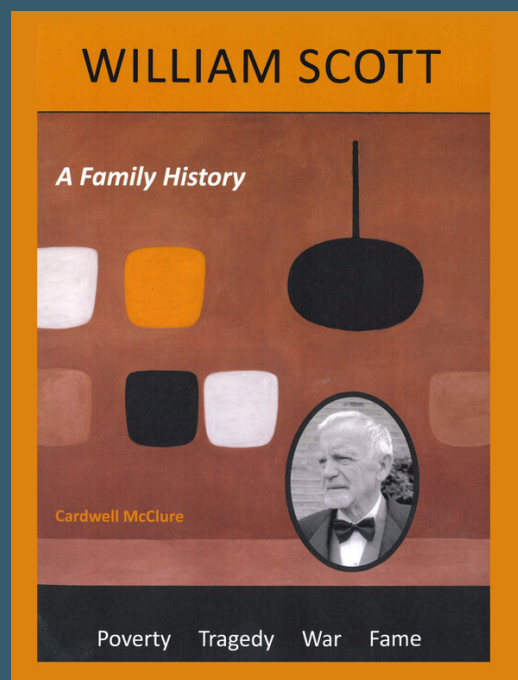


White Island Figures, part of the Lough Erne Pilgrim Way

*Your support helped make 2023 such a memorable year*

From the Royal Visit to Enniskillen Castle in May to hosting the U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland for Economic Affairs in September, much excitement was seen, and visitors from far and wide were welcomed. The year was book-ended by the launches of two new publications. The Museum Friends organised a launch of Cardwell McClure's invaluable and extensively researched family history of his uncle, the artist, William Scott. The end of the year witnessed the exhibition and much-anticipated launch of Mavis Thomson's beautifully produced publication, "Coloured Thoughts". Copies of both publications can now be purchased in the Castle and also through our new online shop [Click here to browse for more](#)

*- thank you!*



- "The Splendid Press: The Marcus Ward Collection" on loan from Libraries NI
- "A History of Sawmilling in Fermanagh" - history of Balcas and other sawmills in the county
- "HERSTORY: Peace Heroines" - the role of women in the Northern Ireland peace process, marking the 25th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement
- "Lough Erne Pilgrim Way" - Fermanagh's internationally important Early Christian monastic heritage
- "Global Voices, Local Choices" - exploring museum collections, identity, and representation
- "Years of Chaos & Hope" - Linen Hall Library exhibition exploring period leading into the 'Troubles'
- "The Lisbellaw Woollen Mill, Henderson & Eadie Ltd (1858 – 1965)"
- "Coloured Thoughts" Sculptural assemblages by Mavis Thomson SRUA



"The Lisbellaw Woollen Mill" exhibition opening



"A History of Sawmilling in Fermanagh"



Anne Carr in "HERSTORY: Peace Heroines"



Pupils from Holy Trinity Primary School, study the signed copy of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement

*"Here the past is before us, warm with its old sacred life and indomitable energy."*

*Devenish: Its History, Antiquities and Traditions, J.E McKenna, 1897*



Boa Island Dreenan Figure represented in the Lough Erne Pilgrim Way exhibition |



Global Voices, Local Choices Workshop

*"I like how this project has brought in voices that would otherwise be marginalised. This has changed my perception of museums."*

*Global Voices, Local Choices participant*

## Visit to Lough Derg via the Lough Erne Pilgrim Way: *Annual Friends Trip*

From the medieval era onwards, pilgrims from across Europe have travelled through Co Fermanagh on their way to St Patrick's Purgatory, Co Donegal. The Friends trip retraced their journey, following the route around Lough Erne to Lough Derg. Prior, Monsignor La Flynn, was our guide for the day around the historic pilgrimage site. The visit ended with the viewing of an exhibition by artists, Dara Hand and Alison Britton at the nearby Cowshed Studios and Gallery. Other events organised as part of the Lough Erne Pilgrim Way programme included Helen Lanigan Wood's talk, "Pilgrim Journeys: Lough Erne to Lough Derg: Fermanagh to Compostela and Rome" and a tour of Galloon Ancient Graveyard by Megan Henvey as part of European Heritage Open Days.



## *Friends AGM 2023*

The AGM took place in the recently opened, beautifully restored Enniskillen Workhouse building. Friends were given a tour of the remaining heritage at the historic site by the Museum's Catherine Scott.



## *Some of our many other events*



Hosting the Enniskillen Plein Air Weekend

The Castle also plays hosts to other people's events, including the highly successful "Big Community Paddle, Picnic & Volunteer Village", organised by Headhunters Railway Museum, and the first-ever Plein Air Weekend, organised by the Ulster Society of Women Artists.



White Island & Davy's Island: Discovering New Archaeological Findings Community Day



Hosting the Big Community Paddle, Picnic & Volunteer Village

# Our collections are acquired, kept safe and explained through your support

2023 saw Fermanagh County Museum's collections enriched and expanded with support from individual Museum Friends, the Friends Association, as well as other supporters invested in our local heritage. Several large donations of significant local material were generously donated, highlighting the range of themes covered in our collections. Joan Carson gave a large selection of photographs relating to the early history of the Girls' Brigade in Enniskillen: [Collections Online Theme](#). Pat Blake donated an extensive collection of shop billheads relating to the history of the family business and the town. Postman and poet, Matt Duggan (1914-1979), is now represented in our collections following a gift of material from his son, Gerry Duggan: [Collections Online Theme](#). These are just some examples of the many generous donations. In addition, the Friends Association agreed to grant fund the purchase of three poignant interiors of Caspar David Friedrich's studio by the artist, Jeremy Henderson (1952-2009). Fermanagh County Museum recently revised its Collections Management Framework Policy, available to consult here: [Collections Management](#)



WW1 postcard donated by Florence McElderry



Breen & Ternan receipt donated by Pat Blake



John Lemon receipt donated by Pat Blake



Photo of official opening of the INTEC Centre donated by Dr Aideen McGinley



Matt Duggan's chairs, stool and table donated by Gerry Duggan



Photo of Scouts and Girls' Brigade, Broadmeadow given by Joan Carson



Studies for 'In Casper David Friedrich's Studio' Nos 1,2 and 4, 2004, oil on paper, by Jeremy Henderson

## Demonstrating repeat visits...

Whenever you come to the Castle, please let Reception know you are a visiting Friend. We can then show the number of repeat visitors we have and demonstrate your ongoing support. If you know someone who would like to join the Museum Friends, membership details can be found here: [Friends Membership](#)