

Expansion of the Museum

During the course of the year Fermanagh District Council developed its plans to expand the museum. Central to these plans was a proposal to erect a new building within the Castle Barracks complex. The proposed building was designed to provide display space, an audio-visual theatre, an archives and research area, a conservation workshop and storage facilities. However following discussions with the Historic Monuments Branch of the Department of the Environment and due to cut backs in grant aid funding, we have had to reconsider our development proposals and examine other ways to expand and develop the museum.

A new scheme based on a fuller use of existing buildings in the Barracks yard is now with the Historic Monuments Branch of the Department of the Environment for consideration. If the Department agrees with this proposal it will achieve a considerable saving on the earlier scheme and in these days of stringent economic measures will represent better value for money.

Events and Exhibitions 1985/86

October-December 1985 — Portraits of Irish Writers

This exhibition of Irish writers painted mainly by Irish artists came from the Ulster Museum. It contained a comprehensive range of portraits from William Allingham, W. B. Yeats, and James Joyce to more contemporary writers like Seamus Heaney, Jennifer Johnston and Paul Muldoon, the work of artists such as Helen Allingham, Louis le Brocquy, Edward McGuire, Basil Blackshaw and Neil Shawcross. It also included a portrait of the poet Frank Ormsby by Ross Wilson, a charcoal drawing commissioned by the Friends of Fermanagh County Museum, and presented to the Museum by Joan Trimble, patron of the "Friends". Frank Ormsby attended the opening of the exhibition and read poems from his recent collection.



Terence Flanagan opening the exhibition "Portraits of Irish Artists" with from left Frank Ormsby, Joan Trimble and Helen Lanigan Wood.

(Photo: Impartial Reporter)

January-March 1986 — History of the Postal Service and Valentine Cards

In January the Friends of Fermanagh County Museum enjoyed a pleasant lunch provided by the Northern Ireland Postal Board to mark the opening of the exhibition celebrating the 350th anniversary of the postal service. The exhibition of maps, posters, uniforms, prints, seals and stamps traced the development of postal communications in Ireland since the 17th century. Also on view was an exhibition of Valentine Cards from the Ulster Museum some of which pre-dated the postal service. Mr. Daniel Carty, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Postal Board, opening the exhibition paid tribute to the work of Mr. Robert Heslip of the Ulster Museum who was responsible for assembling the exhibitions. On St. Valentine's day the exhibition of valentine cards featured in a television programme shown on the Ulster Television network.

April-August, 1986 — Crafted in Ireland

This exhibition from the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum covered a wide range of Irish crafts — willow, rush and straw work, glass, clog making, spinning, bookbinding and candlemaking.

Some Fermanagh crafts were also featured — scythe-stone making by the Mulholland family at Eshbrally quarry near Lisnaskea and fly-tying by Frank McPhillips of Tempo. Video programmes of Irish craft workers were shown daily. These were made by David Shaw Smith for the television series "Hands" and proved to be very popular with visitors. Equally popular were the craft demonstrations held in June — Basket making by Annabel Mitchell, Irish crochet by Caroline Little, Spinning by Rosemary Perry, Drawnthread work by Valerie Wilson and Fly-tying by Frank McPhillips.

September-October, 1986 — History of Wine Exhibition

This exhibition from Harveys Wine Museum in Bristol, illustrated the history of wine making and displayed a wide range of articles from the 18th and 19th centuries associated with the serving and drinking of wine — bottles, decanters, decanter labels, cork screws and a fine collection of early wine glasses. Mr. Jim Lunny, chairman of Fermanagh District Council opened the exhibition and Miss Juliet Hawkes from Harveys of Bristol spoke about the Wine Museum in Bristol and about its collections.



At the opening of the exhibition to mark the 350th anniversary of the Postal Service are (from left), Mr. Gerry Burns, Clerk and Chief Executive of Fermanagh District Council, Mr. Robert Heslip, Assistant Keeper, Ulster Museum, Mrs. Helen Lanigan Wood, Museum Curator, Mr. Daniel Carty, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Postal Board and Mr. Jim Lunny, vice-Chairman of Fermanagh District Council.

(Photo: Impartial Reporter)



At the opening of the exhibition "Crafted in Ireland" were (from left), Mrs. Helen Lanigan Wood, Mr. Frank Mulholland, scythe-stone maker, Most Reverend Dr. Joseph Duffy, Bishop of Clogher, who opened the exhibition, Mrs. Megan McManus, assistant keeper of Crafts at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Mr. Ned Gavin, cooper and Mr. Frank McPhillips, fly-tyer.

(Photo: Impartial Reporter)



Annabel Mitchell demonstrates basket making at Fermanagh County Museum.



Rosemary Perry shows how wool is spun during the "Crafted in Ireland" exhibition.

(Photo: Alan McCartney, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum)

**October-December 1986 —
T. P. Flanagan: "Places" Paintings
1960-1985**

An exhibition covering twenty five years of landscape painting in Fermanagh and the West, this was assembled mainly from private collections. The opening was performed by the Ulster poet John Hewitt who described Flanagan's art as "unemphatic, lyrical and gentle". He said their society was "plagued and bedevilled" by emphatic speech with everyone saying "no", and it was comforting in their beleaguered society to turn to an artist who said "yes".

The exhibition included a bronze head of T. P. Flanagan, sculpted by his son Philip, and recently purchased for the museum by the Friends of Fermanagh County Museum.

The Museum's Collection Policy

In October, 1986, Fermanagh District Council adopted the following collection policy for Fermanagh County Museum.

Fermanagh County Museum was established by Fermanagh District Council to collect, record, preserve and display objects reflecting the history of settlement in Fermanagh and its environs.

1. The collection will cover the fields of history, prehistory, folk and rural life, fine arts, crafts, geology, botany and zoology.
2. Only those objects which relate to the aims of

Fermanagh County Museum will be added to the collection.

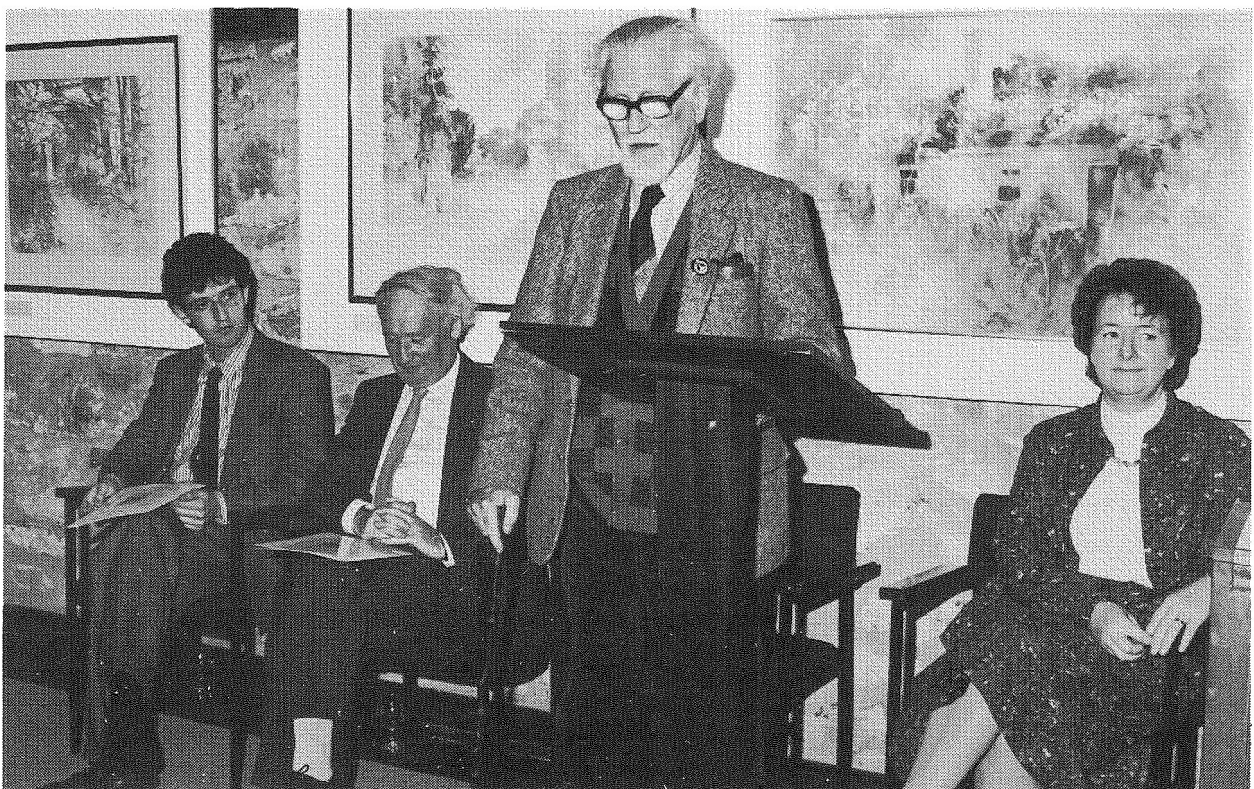
3. Items may be added to the collection by gift or purchase.
4. A gift is understood to be an outright one, allowing it to be displayed, loaned or disposed of at the discretion of the museum authorities.
5. The museum does not accept indefinite loans.
6. Loans to or from the museum must be for a defined period and for definite purposes of display, research or education.
7. The museum will collect only those objects for which it can provide adequate care, storage and display space.
8. The Register of Acquisitions maintained by the museum will contain full details of the history of each object.

Friends' First Coach Trip

There was a full turn out for the bus trip to Donegal on August 16th. The party visited Glenveagh National Park and enjoyed the many facilities there, the audio visual programme at the Visitor Centre, an interesting tour of the gardens led by Mr. Philip Wood and Miss Mary Forest (in spite of inopportune showers) and a visit to the recently opened Castle, the former home of the late Henry P. McIlhenny.

Then followed a visit to Derek Hill's house and the Glebe Gallery near Churchill where we were received by the Curator, Mrs. Frances Bailey.

We would like to plan another coach trip for next year so if any of you have ideas of where you would like to visit please let us know.



John Hewitt opening the exhibition of T. P. Flanagan: "Places" Paintings 1960-1985, with from left Philip Flanagan, Terence Flanagan and Helen Lanigan Wood.

(Photo: Impartial Reporter)



Our day out in Donegal.



Outside Derek Hill's house near Churchill.

New Member of Staff

In April 1986, Catherine McCullough, a native of Londonderry, joined the staff of Fermanagh County Museum as Museum Officer, replacing Miss Vera Watters, who left in November 1985. A recent graduate of Economic and Social History from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, Miss McCullough has worked in a voluntary capacity in Crail Museum, Fife, the Central Museum, Dundee, Tayside and the Ulster American Folk Park, Omagh. Before coming to Fermanagh she worked as a genealogist in the Public Records Office in Belfast and as an oral historian in the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Holywood.

“The Maguires of Fermanagh and the Town of Enniskillen” on Video

The audio visual presentation “The Maguires of Fermanagh and the Town of Enniskillen” is now available on video and has been selling successfully particularly to American and Australian visitors. Indeed this success has enabled us to bring down the cost of these video cassettes substantially, a welcome change these days.

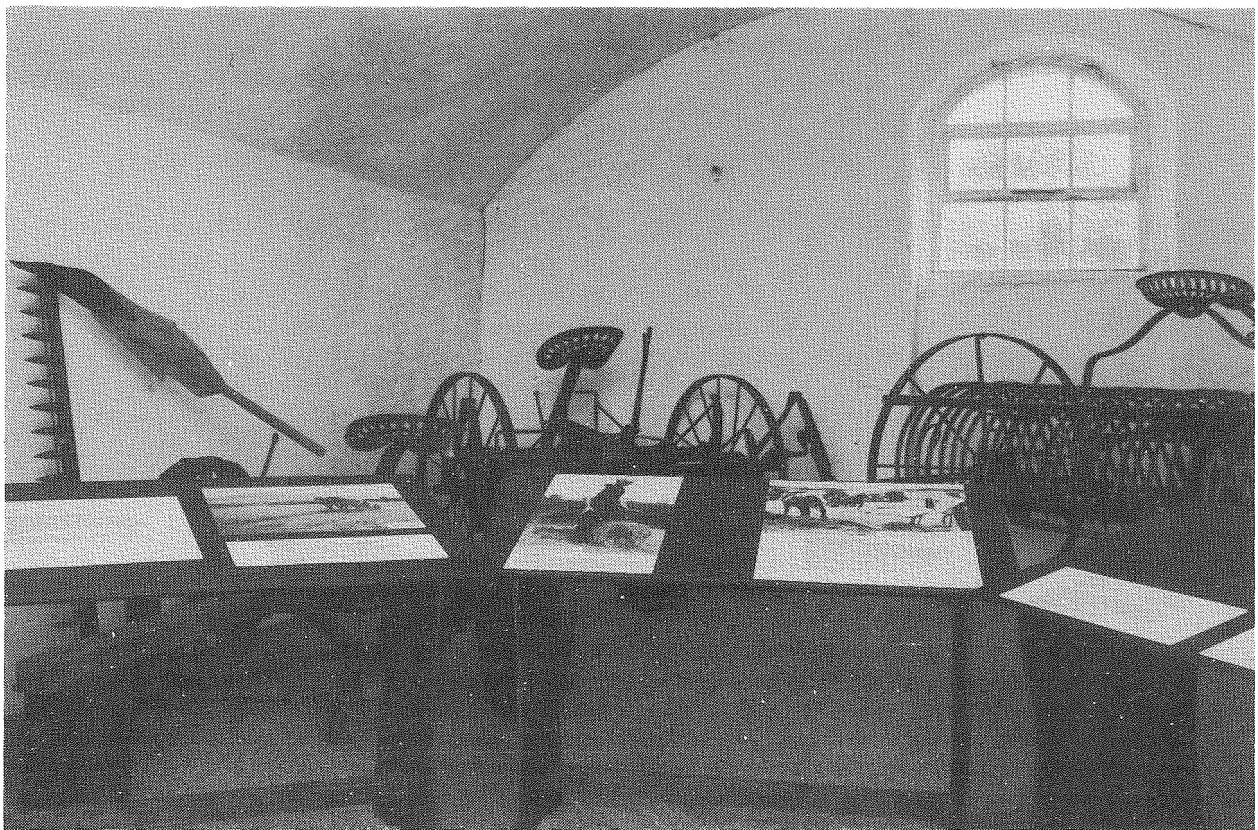
The Old Days in Rural Fermanagh

Our project of restoring and conserving old farm equipment continues at Castle Archdale Country Park under the aegis of the Action for Community Employment scheme. Tommy Maguire of Lisnarick joined Paul Keane during the year and contributed a great deal to the project through his experience of having used much of the more recent farm equipment himself.

Among the more interesting items acquired during the year was a plough made by the noted Sweeney family of Irvinestown presented by Mr. D. Cowan of Drumreane, a root drill for sowing turnips from Mr. J. West of Ballycassidy and a Bamlett mowing machine from Mr. C. Phenix of Derryinch. Incidentally we are still on the look out for certain items of farm equipment such as a wooden-iron plough, a slide car, reaping and binding machines and an example of a locally forged farm gate.

History of Haymaking Exhibition

In August two small rooms were made available to us by the D.o.E. in Castle Archdale farmyard, just enough space to mount a display relating to the history of haymaking in Fermanagh. This was a nice example of co-operation between Fermanagh District Council and the Department of the En-



Part of the History of Haymaking display at Castle Archdale Country Park.



Tommy Maguire puts some finishing touches on the donkey cart displayed in Castle Archdale.

vironment. We provided the text and photographs which were then mounted and encapsulated by the Conservation Branch of the D.o.E.

The display includes a Deering mowing machine from Mr. W. Brown of Rossmacwhinney, a hay tedder and a "Tumblin' Paddy" from Dr. R. Brandon of Castletown, Monea, and a Bamford hay rake and a rick-shifter from Mrs. A. Smyth of Lackilagree, Newtownbutler. There are also two carts on display, a well preserved donkey cart from Mr. J. Gray of Blacklion and a horse cart from Mr. C. Phenix of Derryinch. This display is open to the public every day throughout the year.

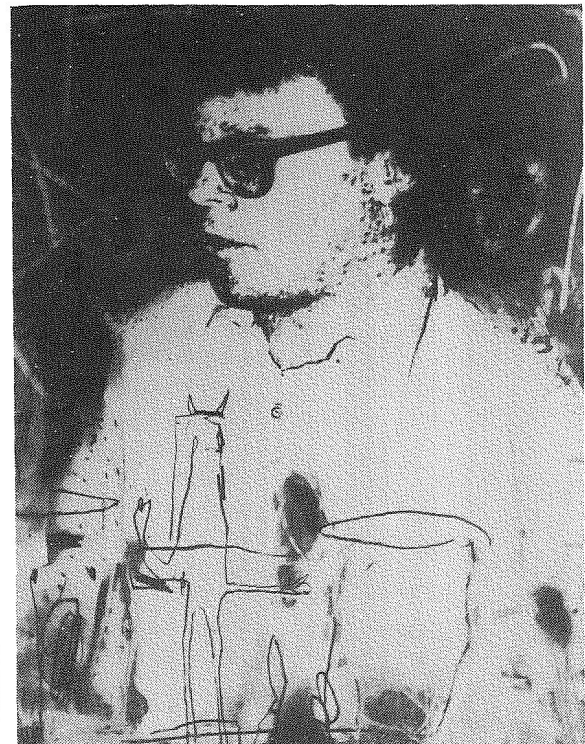
Friends make Acquisitions Possible

At a time when public funding sources are shrinking, the funds accumulated by the Association of Friends are an important source of revenue for the museum, making possible the following acquisitions.

During 1985 and 1986 we acquired a portrait of the Irvinestown poet Frank Ormsby by Ross Wilson for £160, a head in bronze of T. P. Flanagan R.H.A., by his son Philip Flanagan for £1,000 and a landscape painting by the Lisbellaw artist Jeremy Henderson "Cuilcagh under a Renaissance sky" for £550. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland supported these three purchases with grants amounting to 50% of the cost, which helps stretch our funds and for which we are very grateful. Thanks to the Friends we also acquired a collection of Belleek pieces for £620, several pieces including an eggery and a porcelain cup, saucer and plate from the first period and a selection of four pieces from the pottery's second period of production.

Annual Subscriptions

The annual subscriptions are due on April 1st. The ordinary subscription is still £5.00, family subscriptions £8.00, corporate membership for schools and institutions £15.00 and rate for O.A.P.'s, unwaged and students £2.00. Cheques should be made payable to The Friends of Fermanagh County Museum and may be sent to Fermanagh County Museum, Castle Barracks, Enniskillen.



Portrait of Frank Ormsby by Ross Wilson.

Work Behind the Scenes

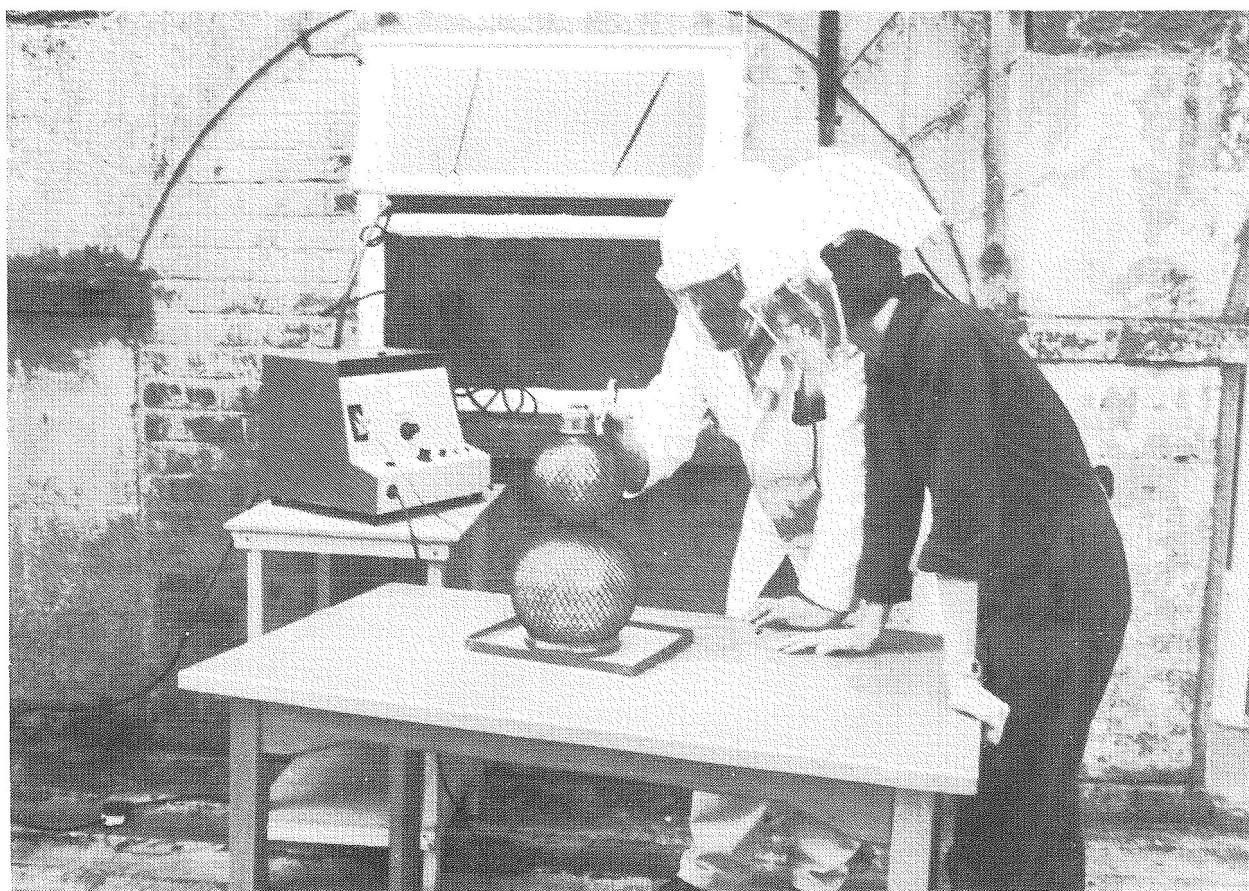
During the last year work has been concentrated on improving the storage facilities in the museum.

Our main store is in Irvinestown, a modern three roomed building where our farm machinery collection is housed. Shelves have been installed in two of the rooms allowing us to store many of the bulkier items from our folklife collections.

During the year the D.o.E. kindly provided us with a small additional room in the arcaded wing of the Barracks which has been fully shelved to house the smaller and more fragile items in our collection. This has released our "conservation room" for the purpose for which it was originally intended — a workshop for cleaning and conserving the collection. A fume cupboard has been installed and good work-top areas. The airbrasive machine, a most useful piece of equipment for cleaning objects, has been set up in a separate section of the room to prevent the spread of dust.



A corner of the new store in Irvinestown.



Sometimes in order to work on larger objects the airbrasive machine is used out of doors. Here Museum Officer Catherine McCullough is being instructed in the use of the machine by the conservator from Historic Monuments Branch of D.o.E., Mr. Malcolm Fry.

Museum Acquisitions 1985-'86

Fine Arts

In this category the main acquisitions — paintings, sculpture and Belleek pottery — were purchased through the generosity of the Friends of Fermanagh County Museum with help from the Arts Council. See the article "How your money is spent" for a list of these. Two engraved prints were added to our collection of local topographical prints, one of Devenish by Sparrow in 1794, the other a view of Enniskillen Town Hall and Water Street by Rose Dixon, presented by Lord Belmore. In addition to the Belleek collection acquired by the Friends we also bought some attractive porcelain pieces from the first and second periods of production tumblers, jugs and sugar bowl, and a fine jardiniere. Among the earthenware acquisitions was a fruit bowl, a gravy boat and a French style bed-pan. We also received a donation of a first period Holy Water Font from Mr. Peter Ruddy and an interesting Melvin Ware ewer, from Mr. John Ruddy.

Books, Maps and Documents

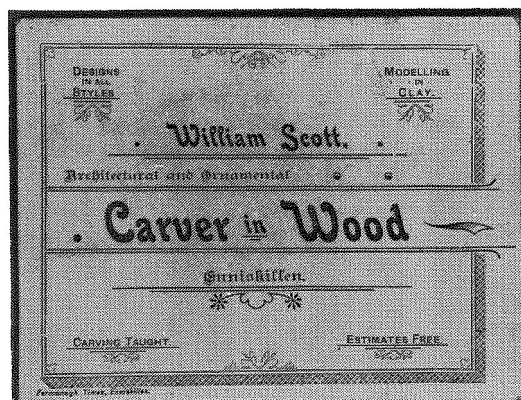
Mrs. Mary Rogers came to Fermanagh on holidays during the summer and gave us a manuscript copy of her most recent book "Prospect of Tyrone," soon to be published. She also brought with her another gift of books from Mrs. Alice Crichton, formerly of Tamlaght, which included a fine copy of The Antiquities of Ireland by Francis Grose, published in 1794.

We were fortunate to be able to purchase a bound volume of the first edition Ordnance Survey maps of Co. Fermanagh — an excellently engraved set of maps printed in 1835. We also acquired many interesting documents, a collection relating to the former Downes Brewery in Enniskillen, bill heads from shops in Enniskillen and throughout the county, bill heads from the Belleek Pottery and a cer-



tificate issued by Enniskillen Corporation conferring the freedom of Enniskillen on one William Frith. Among the items of particular local interest is a business card of William Scott "Carver in Wood"

who was responsible for the beautiful carving on the front door of Enniskillen Town Hall.



Old Photographs

We received an interesting collection of 14 black and white photographs from Mr. J. P. Sutherland of Carrickfergus recording farm work at the Skea Hall farm of Mr. Jack Cathcart in the summer of 1941. The activities recorded are haymaking, straw rope making, sawing trees, feeding Rhode Island hens and pumping water from the well. An early method of making silage is also recorded. Mr. Sutherland who now lives in Lincolnshire, recalls travelling from Belfast to Enniskillen by the Great Northern Railway and paying £1.10.0 for his return fare.

Household Equipment

In this category we acquired a collection of wooden bowls from Owl Island presented by Mr. James Leslie Ternan of Plymouth, an attractive Butter Stamp from Mr. Gabriel Gault and a collection of Harnen Stands from Mr. Noel Parker. An unusual Clothes Spirit Iron was given by Miss Daphne Murphy and an old milk bottle from Irvinestown Creamery was presented by Mr. James Carter.

Archaeological Items

Mr. James McKeaney presented us with an interesting piece of worked oak from a bog near his home at Imeroo, Tempo. From a dendrochronological analysis of the sample by Dr. Michael Baillie of Queen's University, Belfast, it was established that the oak had been felled nearly 3,500 years ago. Mrs. R. Rea of Brookeborough gave us a wooden bowl found in the Colebrooke river which has since undergone specialised treatment by Mr. Malcolm Fry, conservator in the Archaeological Survey, Belfast. Mr. Fry also conserved an iron spearhead found in the Silles river and presented to us by Mr. Fred Carroll.

It is not possible for us to name all our donors individually but we would like to express here our gratitude to all of you for supporting us so generously. We continue to receive a great variety

of interesting items, from the patchwork quilt given by Mr. Peter Maguire, the Christening Robe from Mr. Brian Edwards, to the Shoemaker's last from Mr. Norman Elliott and the special paint brush of badger hair from Mr. Cahir McKeown. We received three interesting items relating to the history of the railways — an iron plaque of the Great Northern Railway from Mr. Walter Brady, a free pass of 1897 from the Clogher Valley Railway Company and two Time Tables of 1937 from the same company, all three from Dr. George Gillespie.

During 1985 the museum recorded 120 acquisitions. The number of visitors to the museum was 10,200.

It is a matter of regret that so little of our collection can be put on public display due to the lack of space. It is hoped that a solution to this problem will be found in the near future. So few people are aware of how much interesting local material has been gathered by the museum during its ten years of existence.

Forthcoming Events at the Museum in 1987

In February an Ulster Museum travelling exhibition of Archaeological Illustration.

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Saturday, February 7th at 12.30 p.m. Illustrated talk by Deirdre Crone of the Antiquities department of the Ulster Museum on the exhibition "Archaeological Illustration."

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An exhibition in March, Kenneth Jamison: A Personal Selection of Paintings, Sculpture, and Ethnography from the Ulster Museum.

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Saturday, March 14th at 12.30 p.m. Illustrated talk by Kenneth Jamison, Director of the Arts Council, on his selection of paintings, sculpture and ethnography.

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A exhibition in May. "Damned Nonsense!" The Geological Career of the third Earl of Enniskillen.

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Saturday, June 6th. Naturalists in Fermanagh. To co-incide with the exhibition about the third Earl of Enniskillen, there will be a programme of lectures in the afternoon of June 6th about naturalists in Fermanagh. Organised by the Society for the History of Natural History these lectures will be held in Ardhowen Theatre and will be open to the Friends of Fermanagh County Museum. Dr. Philip Doughty will speak on the discover of the Marble Arch Caves, Mr. Kenneth James on Lord Enniskillen's geological collections, Mr. Robert Nash on Sir John Langham and Dr. Charles Nelson on John White — Letterbreen to Botany Bay.

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Coach trip for the Friends in the Summer. Details later.