

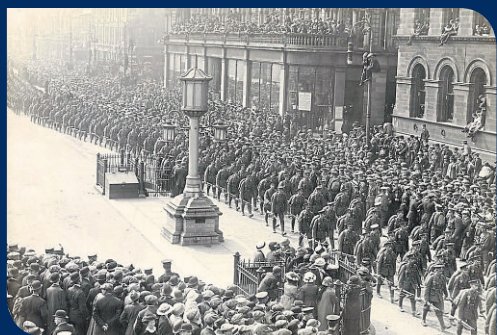


Jousters take centre stage at Carrickfergus Bruce Festival



Europe's premier jousting team the Knights of Royal England will be among the many attractions at the Bruce Festival in Carrickfergus on May 30 & 31 - an event which commemorates the crowning of Edward Bruce as King of Ireland in 1315.

SEE PAGE 7



Recalling how thousands of members of the 36th (Ulster) Division paraded through Belfast in a poignant march to the Front

PAGE 5



Ulster-Scots Agency juvenile pipe band perform at inaugural Spring Gatherin

PAGES 10&11



Billy Kennedy addresses fourth annual Whitelaw Reid Memorial lecture

PAGE 13

Fair faa ye



Welcome to the May 2015 edition of the Ulster-Scot.

The Ulster Scots Agency is gearing up for an exciting Festival season during the summer months with several large scale festivals due to take place in the coming weeks. The Bruce Festival 2015 will be taking place on 30th and 31st May at various locations in Carrickfergus and will be full of family entertainment such as the Knights of Royal England Jousting Team and will be free to attend.

The Tall Ships will also be returning to Belfast for 2015 and the Ulster Scots Agency is busy preparing a programme of entertainment to celebrate our maritime heritage in association with Belfast City Council. You can read more about our involvement at upcoming festivals throughout this issue.

The Ulster Scots Agency has launched a new website at www.discoverulsterscots.com. The website will help support the new Discover Ulster Scots Visitor Centre at 1-9 Victoria Street, Belfast and provide places to visit for those interested in finding out more about their Ulster Scots heritage – find out more on Page 13!

Also in this edition we have a wonderful recipe from Judith McLaughlin for Sweet Potato, Leek, Bacon with Irish Cheddar Quiche – you can find this on Page 14. As always we welcome your feedback and hope that everyone finds something of interest in this edition.

Ian Crozier is Chief Executive of the Ulster-Scots Agency

The Ulster-Scot

The official newspaper for the Ulster-Scots Agency /
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch

Main office:

The Ulster-Scots Agency,
The Corn Exchange
31 Gordon Street
Belfast BT1 2LG
Telephone: (028) 9023 1113
Email: info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

International callers dialling the Ulster-Scots Agency:

Europe - 00 44 28 9023 1113
Australia - 00 11 44 28 9023 1113
USA - 011 44 28 9023 1113

Regional office in Raphoe:

The Ulster-Scots Agency
William Street, Raphoe
Co Donegal
Telephone: +353 7 4917 3876
Fax: +353 7 4917 3985
Email: freena@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

Editor: Gary McDonald
Associate Editor: Catriona Holmes
Production: The Irish News
Printing: Interpress NI Limited

The Ulster-Scot next edition: Saturday July 11
Deadline for copy: Wednesday June 24
Contributors should note that publication of any submitted article is at the Editor's discretion


Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch



TALL SHIPS return to celebrate Belfast's maritime history

The biggest ever event to be staged in Belfast takes place this summer, when the magnificent Tall Ships Race sails back into the city. The city will act as the home port before the start of the 2015 race, with dozens of the world's finest sailing vessels berthed in Belfast over the weekend of July 2 to 5. More than 500,000 people are expected to attend the event, bringing with them an economic windfall of at least £10 million for the city.

This is the third time Belfast has welcomed the Tall Ships Race, having previously staged the event in 1991 and 2009.

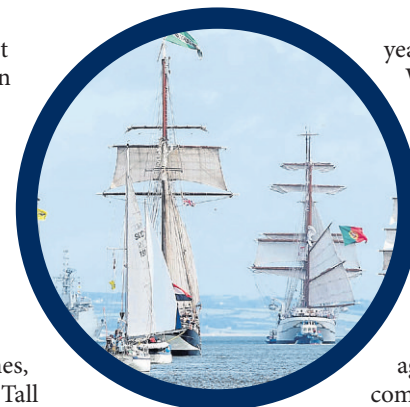
However, with the city acting as the staging post for the first leg of the race, even more ships will be taking part this year, with more than 50 vessels – including 17 massive Class A ships – making the port their home for four days before setting off on their annual challenge. Launching the event, Belfast Lord Mayor Councillor Arder Carson said: "In terms of events, they don't really come much bigger than the Tall Ships Races.

"While, over the past number of

years, we in Belfast have established an internationally-renowned reputation for staging high quality, high profile events, from the MTV EMAs through to last year's World Police & Fire Games, the figures for the Tall Ships speak for themselves.

"More than 50 of the world's finest sailing ships, and their crews, from Europe, North and South America and further afield, will be berthed in Belfast for four days, and we are predicting that more than half a million people will visit them while they are here.

"Add to that, the hugely positive national and international media coverage will bring for the city, coupled with the massive economic benefit – estimated to be in the region of £10 million or more – and you can understand why we are so delighted to have the Tall Ships Race return to Belfast so quickly after its last visit just six



years ago." While Belfast City Council is the principle funder and lead partner on the project, a wide range of other statutory agencies and commercial

companies are also

involved, including the Ulster Scots Agency.

The Agency will be providing musical entertainment on the main stage throughout the festival and are hosting the Scottish Maritime Museum who will be bringing their wooden boat building demonstration for the public to take part in.

The Agency will also have a range of entertainment, exhibitions and talks taking place at the Discover Ulster Scots Centre at 1-9 Victoria Street, Belfast, BT1 3GA.

For further programme information see the website at www.ulsterscotsagency.com/events.

CLICK ON THIS...



For details of what's on check out our events calendar -
www.ulsterscotsagency.com/events

For Ulster-Scots news -
www.ulsterscotsagency.com/news

To sign up for the Ulster-Scots E-Newsletter - visit www.ulsterscotsagency.com/newsletter/ **subscribe/register** your details and receive updates on the areas that you are most interested.

Join us on Facebook - visit www.facebook.com/UlsterScotsAgency now and like our page to keep up to date on what's happening, upload your photos from Ulster-Scots events and share your comments.



WORD OF THE ISSUE

Cribpad

Meaning:
footpath

North Down Museum unveils Plantation Gallery

Earlier this month North Down Museum launched its recently refurbished Plantation Gallery Room, funded by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and the Ulster-Scots Agency.

The gallery tells the story of the two men, James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery, who were awarded lands from King James 1st at the start of the 17th Century. Both men advertised offers of low rent in their newly acquired estates and the first lowland Scottish Settlers arrived in Donaghadee at this time. With it saw the beginnings of the Ulster-Scots heritage and influence on the area, one which would soon spread from Craigantlet and Holywood through the Peninsula to Killyleagh. The exhibition goes on to explore the mapping of these estates through the Raven Maps, the only complete Folio of Plantation Maps in the country. The bound originals are on display and

have also been digitised, allowing visitors to investigate them in detail via an interactive touchscreen.

The exhibition also looks closely at the history of Bangor Castle and its reincarnation through the three buildings built by the Hamilton and Ward families over the centuries alongside the architectural legacy on Bangor by these families.

The third and final Bangor Castle, that stands today, is presented in a unique fashion as it has been 'immortalised' in sugar cubes by the renowned artist, Brendan Jamison. Finally, the architectural legacy of Bangor by these families is also studied.

The exhibition is a permanent feature of North Down Museum. Opening hours are Tuesday – Saturdays 10am-4.30pm, Sundays 12pm-4.30pm, closed Mondays. For more information visit www.northdownmuseum.com or phone 028 9127 1200.

➔ See 'Place to Visit' on Page 5



News and Events

MAG Ulster-Scots Academy: up and coming events

Common Currency: A Conference on the Shared Inheritance of Ulster and North America takes place on June 4 (9.30am-5pm) at the Corn Exchange Building, 31 Gordon Street, Belfast, BT1 2LG. If you require further information contact Ulster Historical Foundation on enquiry@uhf.org.uk

Andrew Jackson: Victor of New Orleans, Seventh President of the United States takes place on July 6 (9.30am-4pm) at the Corn Exchange Building. Again, for more information contact Ulster Historical Foundation on enquiry@uhf.org.uk

Pictured left is one of the 'Raven Maps', the only complete folio of Plantation maps in the country.

Weekend family fun at Cockle Row...

North Down Borough Council and the Ulster-Scots Agency have joined forces to create a fantastic programme of free cultural entertainment every Sunday during July and August at Cockle Row Cottages in Groomsport.

The entertainment (2pm-4pm) is in celebration of Ulster-Scots connections and the influence it has had on our culture and entertainment ever since.

The beautiful village of Groomsport is known for its picturesque harbour that was once a major fishing port and its two fisherman's cottages known as Cockle Row. The old fishermen's thatched cottages have been restored to their original charm depicting what Cockle Row would have been like around 1910.

The planned programme of Sunday entertainment for the summer is as follows:

- July 5 - The Woodworms
- July 12 - NI School of Falconry display and piper Ian Burrows
- July 19 - Risin Stour band
- July 26 - Bright Lights Highland Dancing and piper Andy McGregor
- August 2 - Down & Out Bluegrass Band
- August 9 - The Woodworms
- August 16 - NI School of Falconry Display and The Woodworms



- August 23 - Risin Stour
- August 30 - Bright Lights Highland Dancing and piper Andy McGregor
- September 6 - The Woodworms

For more information of upcoming events in North Down contact Bangor Visitor Information Centre on (028) 9127 0069 or email tic@northdown.gov.uk.

Cockle Row Cottages

Groomsport



Free Weekend Entertainment 2pm – 4pm

Cottages Open: 11am-5pm
Weekends only, April - May
Daily, 1 June - 6 September



All events subject to change.
Event photography will take place during events.

Ards & North Down
Borough Council

028 9127 0069

visitardsandnorthdown.com

Robin's Readings are republished bringing the author's monologues back to life...

As three volumes of Robin's Readings by **W G Lyttle** are republished, we delve into these true little gems of both humour and social history

Immediately on the right on passing through the gates of Bangor Abbey is a monument erected in honour of W G Lyttle, founder of the North Down Herald and Bangor Gazette, who died in November 1896.

Like so many men who once held enormous local influence, he could quite easily have become entirely forgotten with the passage of time.

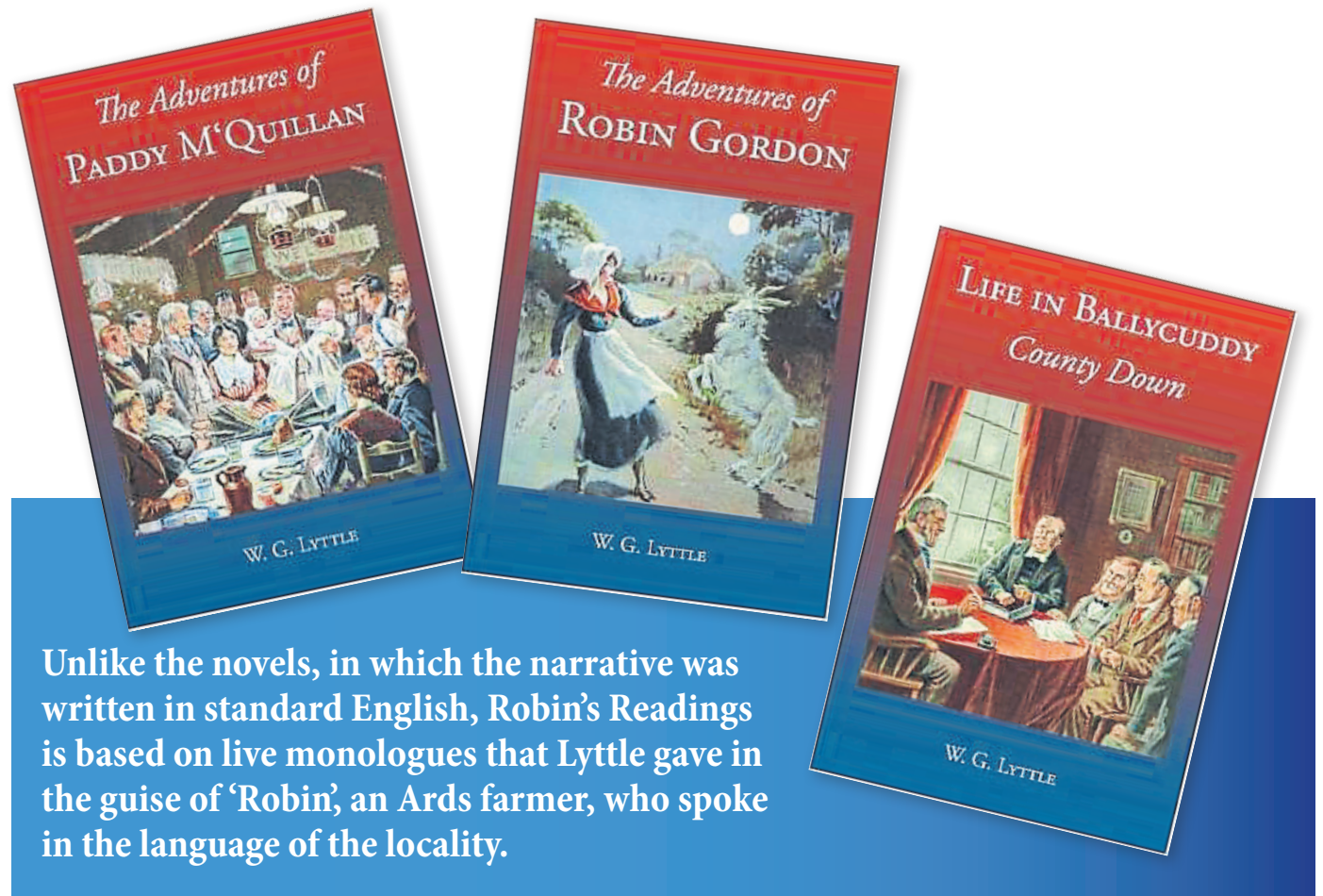
But although relatively few in North Down, the Ards and beyond are familiar with his name today, the books he wrote have ensured that his memory has been kept alive into the 21st Century, for they are not only still immensely entertaining, but provide invaluable social and linguistic history of the area.

Lyttle produced three novels in his day, perhaps the best known of which is *Betsy Gray or Hearts of Down*, a tale of the 1798 Rebellion. He also published *Sons of the Sod: A Tale of County Down*, a story from the Tenant Right era, and *Daft Eddie or the Smugglers of Strangford Lough*.

All of these have been reprinted at least once during the last 50 years. But his earliest work, *Robin's Readings* (originally *Humorous Readings by 'Robin'*), first published 1879/80, has inexplicably failed to maintain the same level of popularity and hasn't been reproduced in approximately a century.

Perhaps the reason lies in it being a collection of humorous stories rather than a 'feature length' novel full of gripping drama; or maybe the dialogue has become increasingly difficult for successive generations to understand.

Unlike the novels, in which the narrative was written in standard English, Robin's Readings is based on live monologues that Lyttle gave in the guise of 'Robin', an Ards farmer, who spoke in the language of the locality.



Unlike the novels, in which the narrative was written in standard English, Robin's Readings is based on live monologues that Lyttle gave in the guise of 'Robin', an Ards farmer, who spoke in the language of the locality.

These performances were enormously popular and secured the success of the printed versions. They propelled Lyttle to fame. Everyone in the area at that time, and many beyond, would have known his name.

Whatever the cause, the neglect of Robin's Readings has been unfortunate, because within its pages are true gems of both humour and social history.

The first volume, *The Adventures of Paddy M'Quillan*, follows the life of Paddy as he goes from being a gormless youth, through courtship, marriage and fatherhood to becoming the mature man who sadly decides that his family's best interests lie in emigration to Canada.

Along the way we are treated to some jewels of timeless comedy, as when he tries to nurse his first baby in the middle of the night.

His wife, Maggie, is forced to take over: "Here, Paddy, gie me the waen here; yernaemenner o' use tae him."

"Oh, deed, A'llgie him tae ye an' welkim," A'll say, "fur he's a cross carnapshus wee brat, so he is!"

"He's naethin' o' the sort, Paddy!" she'll say, an' then A wush ye heerd the flooster she maksaboot him, an' she can talk tae him as nayterally as if she had nursed half-a-dizen. She'll cuddle him up in her arms, an' she'll say,

"Och, himswuz a dear, so himswuz. An' did hims no like hims da tae nurse him?"

A'llpye da! Wheest, my wee birdie, fur himswi' his ain mammans; och, luvin's on him fur a wee mannins; an' wuzhimsvera bad? Wuzhim's wee tootles sore? Och, luk at him's wee eysey-pysie! An' him's wee nosey-posey! An' hims wee mousey-pousey!"

She can gang on that way fur mair than anhoor.

In the second volume, *The Adventures of Robin Gordon*, the narrator changes to old Robin Gordon and features his recollections of courtship, marriage and early fatherhood, but it also provides amusing accounts of the "Newton (Newtownards) Flower Show" and the "Newtownards Mileeshy (Militia)", as well as the introduction of skating and curling to the area.

Gordon continues as storyteller in the third and final volume, *Life in Ballycuddy*, which for the most part focuses on the pivotal role that the Presbyterian Church played in the community, and Lyttle uses this as a vehicle to put across his own views on some burning questions of the day.

Through 'Robin', as a Ballycuddy elder, he delivers an illustration at the General Assembly of 1880 of how attempting to force man (or beast) into not doing something—in this case using music in church services—is more often than not counterproductive:

There's that moiley coo (hornless cow)

o' mine that A had tae keep langedel an' tethered fur mony a yeer fur brekin' intil the squire's clover. The sorra a tether or langel cud A get in Newton, but what she cud brek, an' she wuzneerbrekin' my heart intil the bargain, so yin day A loused her an' tuk her intil the clover fiel, an' sez I till her, 'there, noo, Spotty, eat till ye burst yersel.' (Grate lauchin'.) A declare she jist turned roon an' followed me oot o' the fiel, wi' her heidhingin' doon, an' frae that day till this she nether needitlangel nor tether." (Cheers.)

The three volumes of Robin's Readings have now been republished by Books Ulster of Bangor and are available exclusively from amazon.co.uk, priced circa £6.75 each.

The new editions include an introduction, explanatory footnotes and an extensive glossary of words. They are also available as Kindle downloads.

"It has been hard but enjoyable work making these books available once again," says Derek Rowlinson, proprietor of Books Ulster, "and I do hope that people will make the effort to discover the joys of reading W G Lyttle's work, as I did many years ago."

ISBN: 978-1-910375-13-6 *The Adventures of Paddy M'Quillan* (Vol. 1)

ISBN: 978-1-910375-15-0 *The Adventures of Robin Gordon* (Vol. 2)

ISBN: 978-1-910375-17-4 *Life in Ballycuddy* (Vol. 3)

Great War focus:

Recalling two Ulstermen who were awarded VCs in 1915

Two Ulstermen won VCs in the spring and early summer of 1915 - Robert Morrow on the Western Front and James Somers in Gallipoli.

Robert Morrow, the son of Hugh and Margaret Morrow, was born on September 7 1891 and raised on a farm near Newmills in Dungannon, Co Tyrone. He was 23 years old when he won his VC and a private in the 1st Battalion, Royal Irish Fusiliers.

Marcus Cunliffe, the historian of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, has described him as 'a quiet, undemonstrative boy'. He was also small in stature.

Nevertheless, on April 12 1915 near Messines in Belgium, Private Morrow rescued and carried to places of comparative safety several men who had been buried in the debris of trenches wrecked by shell fire. He carried out this work on his own initiative and under heavy fire from the enemy.

A fortnight later (on April 26) he was killed in action at St Jan in the Ypres Salient, Belgium. He is buried in White House Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery. King George V presented the VC to his mother at Buckingham Palace and his medal is displayed at the Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum in Armagh. James Somers, the son of Robert and

Charlotte Somers, was born on June 12 1884 in Belturbet, Co Cavan. He first joined the Special Reserve of the Royal Munster Fusiliers on January 14 1913. He joined the 2nd Battalion Inniskillings in July 1914, and later served in Belgium and France when War broke out, being severely wounded on the Retreat from Mons in August 1914.

Having recovered from his wounds in England, he was ordered to join the 1st Battalion, and sailed off to Gallipoli. He was 31 years old, and a Serjeant in the 1st Battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers when he won his VC there.

On July 1/2 1915, when, owing to hostile bombing, some of his troops had retired from a sap, Serjeant Somers remained alone there until a party brought up bombs. He then climbed over into the Turkish trench and bombed the Turks with great effect.

Later on, he advanced into the open under heavy fire and held back the enemy by throwing bombs into their flank until a barricade had been established. During this period, he frequently ran to and from his trenches to obtain fresh supplies of bombs. In a letter to his father, Somers explained: "I beat the Turks out of our trench single-handed and had four awful hours at night. The Turks swarmed in from all roads, but I gave them a rough time of it, still holding the trench. It is certain sure we are beating the Turks all right. In the trench I came out of, it was shocking to see the dead. They

lay, about three thousand Turks, in front of our trenches, and the smell was absolutely chronic. You know when the sun has been shining on those bodies for three or four days it makes a horrible smell; a person would not mind if it was possible to bury them. But no, you dare not put your nose outside the trench, and if you did, you would be a dead man."

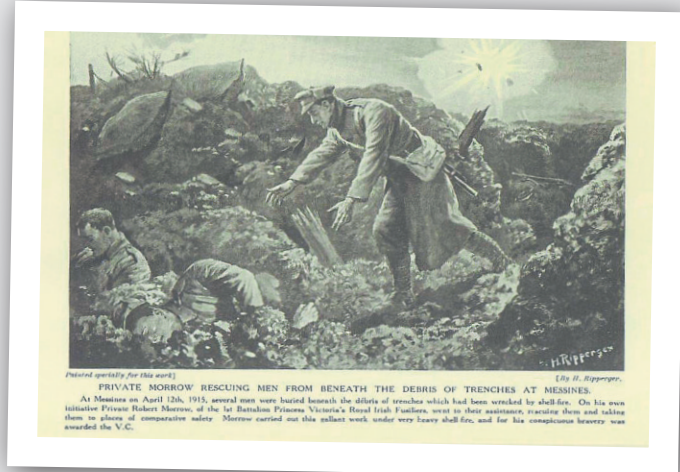
After Gallipoli, he served on the Somme. On April 1 1917 he joined the Army Service Corps. He was subsequently gassed, medically discharged and died in Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary (where his father was now sexton of the local Church of Ireland Church), on May 7 1918.

He was buried with full military honours in Modreeny Church of Ireland cemetery, Co Tipperary. His Union Jack-draped coffin was carried on a gun carriage, led by the Pipe Band of the Cameron Highlanders. His headstone simply states:

'He stood and defended. The Lord wrought a great wonder.'



Robert Morrow and James Somers



Private Morrow rescuing men from beneath the debris

Belfast boys leaving for the Front

A century ago this month, thousands of members of the 36th (Ulster) Division paraded through Belfast in a poignant march.

By the spring of 1915 the 36th (Ulster) Division had completed its preliminary training and the Division was brought together for a parade in Belfast on 8 May prior to departing Ulster's shores.

At 12.30pm that day, 17,000 troops of the Division were called to attention and inspected at Malone by Major General Sir Hugh McCalmont.

Then the soldiers marched to the city centre through streets bedecked with flags and bunting, watched by admiring friends and relatives brought in from all over Ulster by special trains. Unionist leader Sir Edward Carson and his wife Lady Carson, along with Belfast's Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, reviewed the Division as it marched past the front of the City Hall. Each battalion was headed by its fife and

drum or a pipe band, and it took the Division one hour and 40 minutes to pass the City Hall.

In her book 'An Ulsterwoman in England 1921-41 (1942)' Dr Nesca A. Robb recalled: "In common with most of our fellow-citizens, we watched the farewell parade of our own Ulster Division.

"On that occasion, having cheered myself hoarse, I hung so far out of the window to acclaim Lord Carson that I all but precipitated myself head first at my hero's feet. Not many months later, that Division, fighting valiantly, was cut to pieces at the Somme."

According to the historian A.T.Q. Stewart, writing in the mid 1960s, those who witnessed the parade were still haunted by the memory of the eager young faces of the troops 50 years later.



Focus on Legananny Accordion

In our continuing series profiling bands with an Ulster-Scots link, this month we focus on **Legananny Accordion**

The townland of Legananny is situated at the foot of Slieve Croob in the Dromara Hills of rural County Down.

The Lodge Legananny LOL 1455 has been in existence in that area from the early 1800s, led throughout that time by lambeg drums. The Lodge and drums were prominent at the infamous Battle of Dolly's Brae in 1849 where the Legananny brethren were singled out for their courage against the vicious onslaught by Catholic Ribbonmen. Drums continued to lead the Lodge until the early 1900s.

At that time a flute band was formed before the building of the Orange Hall in 1920.

The flute band led the lodge faithfully until the mid 1950s, until membership began to wane because of the lack of interest in the flute and membership had dropped to just six fluters and three drummers.

Around this time accordion bands were formed in the neighbouring townlands of Derryneill, Drumadonald and Ballywillwill, so Legananny followed suit with the formation of the accordion band in 1956, with 16 members.

The band has led LOL 1455 and also leads RBP 1086 and continues to fulfil this role to this day.

After the band was formed members and supporters embarked upon a fundraising drive to raise the necessary finance needed to procure ten new Paolo Soprani accordions which were purchased for £32 each. Two years later new uniforms were presented and dedicated at Legananny Orange Hall. These uniforms lasted for a further 25 years.

From 1958 to 1979 the band carried out many parades and engagements and membership was always stable and consistent. In 1979 new uniforms were purchased and presented at the parade in Legananny which was attended by 19 bands and two years later the band celebrated 25 years on the road with another parade of 22 bands in Legananny.

In 1985 the band suffered the devastating blow when one of its foundation members, William Heenan, was murdered by IRA terrorists at his home in Legananny. Band membership peaked in the 80s and 90s at 20-plus members. New uniforms were purchased in 1996 dedicated at a parade in Legananny attended by 12 bands. On this occasion three stalwarts received presentations namely, Robert Priestley (50 years) and Henry Priestley and Thomas Martin (40 years).

From 2003 the band experienced more growth and this, complemented with a dedicated established membership, gave the band an excellent start to the new millennium.



We at Legananny want to play our part in maintaining our unique cultural traditions and ensuring that the rich history and success of Legananny Accordion Band continues well into the future.



“Legananny prides itself on supporting lodges who do not have bands and are having events such as hall openings and banner unfurlings.”

Many of the instruments were becoming dated and in 2004 an Arts Council Grant of £10,500 was secured for new instruments, which greatly benefited the skills of the band and these accordions enabled the band to expand.

During 2006 the band celebrated 50 years at a function in Ballyward church hall. On this occasion foundation members were invited back and Robert Priestley was presented with a gift in recognition of 60 years service.

From its 50th year celebrations, the band experienced a rapid growth in membership. Those young people who were on percussion instruments then developed their skills on the accordions and drums which swelled the numbers of

the band. Alongside that, friendships were formed amongst the young people which gave them an outlet and opportunity to enjoy the social aspect of the band.

In 2010 new hats were dedicated at a parade in Rathfriland. On that occasion membership stood at 48.

The band subsidises an annual barbecue as a means of saying thank you to everyone connected with it. This includes members and their families, past members and lodge members, which is an enjoyable social occasion and a night of reminiscing.

From 2011 a junior band evolved who now play at functions and charitable events in their own right. In March 2013 some 28 young members played to 400 people at a concert organised by Banbridge Council chairman Junior McCrum in aid of the Mandeville Cancer Unit at Craigavon. The host for the evening was Paul Clark and the young people excelled on that occasion. Undoubtedly one of the proudest moments in Legananny's history was when it was one of three bands that led Rathfriland Orange District No. 3 at the Covenant Parade in Belfast in 2012. There were 44 members on parade that day and everybody appreciated the significance of the momentous occasion.

Legananny prides itself on supporting lodges who do not have bands and are having events such as hall openings and banner unfurlings. It participates at

numerous Sunday services for a wide range of organisations and last year attended almost 25 parades. Band member Sammy Heenan says: “Legananny Accordion is a family-orientated band where kids can excel at their chosen instrument in a relaxed and enjoyable environment, where at present for example we have eight mother/daughter relationships playing in the ranks.”

Mr Heenan said that everyone connected to the band “wants to ensure that it continues to go from strength to strength and continue the legacy left by past members who contributed so much to where we are now”.

He added: “In this age of cultural suppression against our community it is so important that young Protestants appreciate the significance and importance of retaining their culture and identity. “As bands, we must instil confidence and set an example so that our young folk can be confident in who and what they are. In the future they can articulate the merits and benefits that our culture provides in enriching our society rather than the negative stereotyping which we encounter from so many quarters.”

“We at Legananny want to play our part in maintaining our unique cultural traditions and ensuring that the rich history and success of Legananny Accordion Band continues well into the future.”

After Bannockburn... Operation Ireland

To commemorate the crowning of Edward Bruce as King of Ireland in 1315, the Ulster Scots Agency and Carrickfergus Borough Council, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), will host the 2015 Bruce Festival at the end of this month.

The event will be taking place on May 30 & 31 at Carrickfergus Castle, Main Street and Marine Gardens, and among the highlights is the appearance of the Knights of Royal England, Europe's premier jousting team. The Knights will be conducting a dramatic jousting tournament on the Saturday at Marine Gardens with an awesome spectacle of chivalry, hand-to-hand combat, mounted challenges and horsemanship. The Knights are the premiere jousting company in Europe and stage more than 60 shows each year, having performed at both large and small venues all over the world. During the two days the festival will take visitors on a journey through time with a range of medieval events and entertainment including jousting, dramatic re-enactments, street theatre, falconry, traditional storytelling, blacksmith demonstrations,



archery, medieval battle workshops and family entertainment. Ulster Scots music, drama, battles and arts and crafts will also combine to make a great day out for you and your family. Entry to the festival is free, and festival-goers can also enjoy free entry to Carrickfergus Castle on both days. Find out more about the programme at www.ulsterscotsagency.com/events.

Ballyclare May Fair - 259 years in the making

The Ulster Scots Agency is supporting the annual Ballyclare May Fair in partnership with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

Taking place from May 19-23, it will include a wealth of Ulster-Scots activities to keep the family entertained.

Highlights from the programme include the annual horse trading fair, Another Wee Gatherin', Kids Party & Fun Day, traditional Ulster-Scots music and ceilidh dancing and the annual May Fair parade. More information is available at www.ulsterscotsagency.com/events/event/645/ballyclare-mayfair/ or by contacting Newtownabbey Borough Council at 028 9034 0000.

FULL FAIR PROGRAMME

TUESDAY 19 MAY

All day stalls around the town centre
11 – 5pm: Horse Trading Fair, Six Mile Water Park, Council Yard
12pm: Opening of amusements at The Square and Leisure Centre Town Centre
12pm – 8pm: Live entertainment, craft & gourmet food stalls on Main Street
13.00 – 5pm: Kids Fun Day Sixmile Leisure Centre
1:30- 3pm: Hugo Duncan Roadshow
6pm-8pm: Garth Brooks Tribute Concert
7.30 – 8.30pm: Fire safety demo Six Mile

Water Park

WEDNESDAY 20 MAY

2-4pm: Tea dance Town Hall
6-7pm: Pet Show Ballyclare Primary School
7pm-9pm: half price rides amusements
7pm-9pm: Ballyclare Hockey Club Open Night at Ballyclare High School Astro Pitch (Foundry Lane). Age 13 and up

THURSDAY 21 MAY

7:30-10pm Ceilidh
FRIDAY 22 MAY
7pm: Young Farmers Sports and Family Night Ballyclare Rugby Club
4.30pm: Sing a Long Frozen, Town Hall

SATURDAY 23 MAY

All day stalls around the town
10am: Mayfair 10k and 5k Fun Run Ballyclare Rugby Club
11 – 3pm: Classic Car Display, Leisure Centre
11 – 5pm: Kids party and fun day, Leisure Centre
1pm: Parade
2pm: Duck Race at Sixmile Water Park
2-5pm: Ulster Scots music and dance Town Hall Car Park
7:30pm: Another Wee Gatherin' Town Hall (Major Sinclair Memorial Pipe Band)
10:15pm: Fireworks, Town Centre

Ballyclare



SHOP LIVE ENJOY

May Fair Festival 19 - 23 May



KEY EVENTS INCLUDE:

Ulster Scots Music & Dance

Another Wee Gatherin'

Horse Fair, Amusements, Parade, Fun days

Hugo Duncan Roadshow

Garth Brooks Tribute Concert

Largest collection of Robert Burns materials now on display at the Linenhall Library

After years being hidden away, part of the Andrew Gibson collection, the largest collection of Robert Burns materials held outside of Scotland, has been fully restored and put on public view in Belfast's Linenhall Library.

Part of the collection has been restored through £10,000 of grant funding from the Ulster Scots Agency in a project aimed at conserving, preserving and making widely available the 'Gibson Collection of Burns and Burnsiana', which was purchased by public subscription and placed in the Linen Hall Library in 1901.

It includes some 200 rare volumes of the poems of Robert Burns and the 'Songs of Scotland' which have been repaired and rebound to ensure their utility to a modern audience. Many of these books were published in Belfast and all were collected in Belfast.

The minutes of the board of governors of the Linen Hall Library for November 15 1900 recall: "A committee has been formed with the object of acquiring the Gibson Collection of Burns Literature. The collection has been assembled by the wonderful assiduity of one of the

Governors of this library, and its high position amongst others of its class is probably not fully realised by the majority of its townsmen."

The governor mentioned above was Andrew Gibson, born in New Cumnock, Ayrshire, in 1841. In the late 1880s he moved to Belfast where he was the agent for both the G.J. Burns & the Cunard steamship companies based at 49 Queen's Square, Belfast.

A keen sportsman (he was president of the Belfast Bowling Club, Cliftonville Football Club, and vice-president of the Irish Football Association), he was also an avid collector of the works of Robert Burns as well as the Irish poet Thomas Moore. The Gibson Collection was acquired by the Linen Hall Library in 1901 from Gibson, aided by an appeal to the good citizens of Belfast who raised £1,000 (a staggering £109,888 in today's money) towards the purchase of the collection. By 2010, a large part of the collection was held off-site at the library's storage facility, primarily because of lack of space in the library itself.

Altogether, there are in excess of 1,500 items in the collection, including many editions of the works of Burns. There are also hundreds of works relating to him,



Julie Andrews, director Linenhall Library, Ian Crozier CEO Ulster Scots Agency, Deborah Douglas events co-ordinator and Andrew Dunlop library assistant



known as "Burnsiana".

In 2010, the Linenhall Library decided that the collection was too significant to remain in storage and it was brought back on to the premises, re-catalogued and stabilised as far as condition was concerned.

Indeed while visitors were refreshing themselves with a cappuccino in the coffee shop and Northern Room on the second floor, few would have known that the

Gibson Collection was right behind them in the covered wall recesses in these rooms. Last year the library secured the five-figure grant from the Ulster Scots Agency to conserve 200 of those books in the collection, most in need of care and attention.

The conservation was undertaken by Liam McLaughlin of bookbinding specialists Finebind.

And finally the books have been returned to the library, but this time they are not behind the walls in the coffee shop. For thanks to the foresight of the library's director Julie Andrews, the guidance of deputy librarian Monica Cash, and the expertise of cultural programmer Deborah Douglas, the results of Liam's craft can now be seen in the Governor's Room in the Library in a setting that befits them.

Included in the collection is the 1787 Belfast edition of 'Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect' and the facsimile reprint of the Kilmarnock edition as well as early examples of Burns' work published in the Belfast News Letter.

The restoration of the collection to make it more accessible to the public will promote the knowledge and understanding of Ulster-Scots history, heritage and culture by the promotion of Burns writing.

Exceptional standard at flute band contest

Lisburn's Island Civic Centre was the venue for the Flute Band Association of Northern Ireland's (FBANI) 55th annual own choice contest.

The event was supported by the Ulster Scots Agency with bands from across the Province, from Kilkeel to Londonderry, taking part in a musical extravaganza showcasing the immense talent and diversity of the part-music flute band movement in Northern Ireland. Adjudicator was Sandy Hay, head of Woodwind at Birmingham Music Service, and a broad spectrum of music was performed on the day, ranging from Avicii to Tchaikovsky, played on B flat, piccolo, G treble, concert, alto, bass and contra bass flutes.

Hundreds of spectators were treated to fantastic performances by bands such as William King Memorial (Londonderry), Pride of Ballinran (Kilkeel), Articlave (Coleraine), Ballywalter, Castlegore Amateur (Ballymena), Churchill



(Londonderry), Ballyclare Victoria, Hamilton (Londonderry), Ballylone Concert (Ballynahinch), Ballymena Young Conquerors and Hunter

Moore Memorial (Newry). In the grade two section, Lord Londonderry's Own CLB (Newtownards) finished first with a rendition of F. Von Suppe's Poet and Peasant Overture. In the championship flute section Ballygowan emerged eventual winners in a very competitive field, awarded 99 points by the adjudicator for their performances of Tchaikovsky's Marche Slave and G. Verdi's I Vespri Siciliani. Congratulations go to all the participating bands for the exceptional standard of musicianship displayed at the successful event.

An Ulster-Scots channel tunnel?

A CROSSING linking Scotland with Northern Ireland has always been seen as a “visionary idea”.

Indeed in its recent election manifesto, one local political party called for a feasibility study into a tunnel or enclosed bridge across the North Channel from Larne to the Scottish coastline. However, leading engineers with experience of infrastructure projects in both Scotland and Northern Ireland have dismissed the idea as either unworkable or unlikely to have any economic viability. And one Scotland MSP even described any such crossing as “a miracle project” from “the land of dreams”. But this isn’t a new idea, because as far back as the 1880s, plans were being discussed for the link - and our island history might have been rather different had one imaginative submarine proposal been able to proceed. Articles in the Downpatrick Recorder on July 31 and August 14 1886 reported enthusiastically on the potential for a railway tunnel between Donaghadee and Portpatrick. The initial account had clearly been met with some scepticism, as the first article acknowledged when it began as follows: “An investigation into the telegraphic statement published in the Belfast News Letter on Saturday shows that it is substantially correct. “The preliminary proceedings connected

“As far back as the 1880s, plans were being discussed for the link - and our island history might have been rather different had one imaginative submarine proposal been able to proceed.”

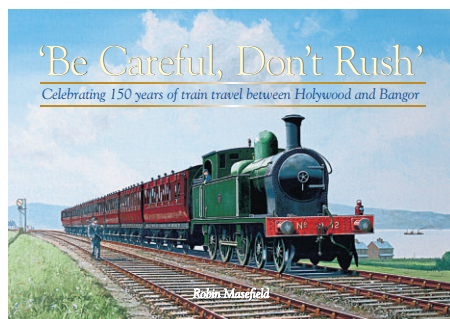
with a projected immense work are really on foot, and the promoters, if they obtain the sanction of Parliament to their great undertaking - the greatest by far, from an engineering point of view, ever yet undertaken within the bounds of the British Empire - are sanguine that it will be a financial success.” The article noted that those involved in this proposal were some of the principal noblemen and gentlemen, nearly all of whom held high positions in the monetary world, who had promoted the formation of a submarine tunnel between the coasts of England and France which had been defeated in Parliament two years previously. That defeat had not been on account of any engineering difficulties or want of capital, but mainly on the strength of military evidence that it would be a source of continual danger of foreign invasion! No such danger could possibly arise from the construction of a tunnel between the coasts of Downshire and Wigtownshire, the Recorder assured its readers. Moreover, Government departments viewed the scheme with favour.

Reportedly arrangements were in progress for sinking a deep shaft near Donaghadee to assess the nature of the strata. The cost of the tunnel had been estimated - by competent authorities - at about £5 million. One major benefit would be that the American traveller and the mailbags from that country could be landed at Lough Foyle, and reach London about 11 hours afterwards, by an uninterrupted rail journey. Indeed, it was anticipated: “The sight-seeing American would land at Moville and then go to see the Giants Causeway, and would pay his passing tribute to the tradesmen of Belfast instead of to their rivals in Dublin.” The tunnel would indeed bring considerable advantage to the merchants of Ulster, though the article recognised that for the rest of Ireland the gain to be derived from the proposal was not so evident. Two weeks later, the newspaper recorded with some excitement that a specimen stone, one foot six inches each way, had been taken from the rocks on the Common not far from the railway station

at Donaghadee, and forwarded to London for the purpose of testing its quality. The article continued: “It is stated, on apparently good authority, that it is intended shortly to commence making a boring 1,000 feet deep one mile inland, and convenient to the present line of railway. “It has been announced that Mr Daniel Delacherois has been over in London, and has had an interview with the promoters of the Channel Tunnel project, who are confident of success. “The project continues to be more and more discussed on its merits. An eminent public engineer, writing on Wednesday on the scheme, says ‘Personally, I have no doubt as to the ultimate success of the project. Opposition is a thing to be expected and surmounted.’ Immediately following this article, the Recorder published a splendid letter written by ‘An Irishman’ to the Scotsman newspaper. The author, who was presumably of a pacifist bent, suggested that were this project to be within the scope of practical engineering, it would be “the means of introducing what I consider an essential element to the permanent settlement of the Irish question - the Government - would be giving to many starving but honest British workmen the means of earning a living, far more noble and patriotic than throwing away millions of British money and spilling British blood in prosecuting barbarous and useless wars.”

Recalling the history of a much-loved railway line

Monday May 18 will mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of the railway line between Holywood and Bangor. And now a new book, ‘Be Careful, Don’t Rush - Celebrating 100 Years of Train Travel between Holywood and Bangor’ provides a fascinating account of the ups and downs of this much-loved local transport artery. The book has been written by Robin Masefield, an author who has produced previous books about local history in North Down, as well as on train travel overseas. ‘Be Careful, Don’t Rush’ was one of the affectionate names given in times past to the Belfast and County Down Railway (BCDR) which constructed the original line from Belfast Queen’s Quay to Holywood, which opened on August 2 1848. The BCDR was itself nationalised into the Ulster Transport Authority exactly 100 years later. But the company that built the line from Holywood to Bangor which opened in May 1865 was the Belfast, Holywood and Bangor Railway (the BHBR). It lasted for less than 20 years before it was bought up by the bigger BCDR. This book has a little bit of everything and is quite like no other. It should appeal to railway historians, people who want to know more about what Holywood and Bangor were like in the 19th century and



the impact of the railway, and to armchair travellers who enjoy reminiscences and anecdotes about travel in years gone by. As well as the two main towns, the book features well-illustrated sections on each of the intermediate stations. The book is rich in stories, whether of company directors trying to stave off bankruptcy by creative accounting, of the idiosyncrasies of individual station-masters, or of ambition, innovation and even romance. It also brings out the dangers of train travel in former times, drawing on contemporary reports of accidents and even an attempted murder by a jilted fiancé. The book offers insights into the lives of the folk in big houses, in station houses, and even those with no house at all! Author Robin Masefield says: “This is largely a story about people. It took Irish

and English as well as local expertise to get the line built, and there was a strong Ulster Scots element, as well as a focus on links to Scotland itself. “We learn so much about their plans, travails and ultimate triumphs through the dusty documents of historic records and faded photographs. Bringing their story alive and sharing it has been a rewarding journey itself.” The book is lavishly illustrated with more than 150 photographs and copies of original documents. The author has been fortunate to be able to draw on magnificent collections of photographs of the line from the 1930s onwards, as well as an attractive range of coloured postcards and drawings. The book also features paintings by well-known local artists. The book is being published as part of the programme of events to commemorate the sesquicentennial celebration of the opening of the Bangor line. It coincides with the railway exhibition that has been running at the North Down Museum, as well as forthcoming exhibitions at the Bangor and Holywood Libraries. Robin adds: “I’m hugely grateful to a vast number of people who have contributed in so many ways to the book. A wide range of railway experts have permitted the use of precious photographs and freely given their advice. Former staff, their relatives and

many passengers on the line have shared fascinating recollections. “Moreover, I would like to thank a number of other local organisations who have assisted in a wide variety of ways - I have really enjoyed working with them to make a contribution to the wider programme of commemorative events. Without all their support, there would have been no book.” All profits from the sale of the book will go to two local charities - AGenda which provides invaluable services for the elderly in Ards and North Down, and is based in Hamilton Road, Bangor, and Holywood Shared Town which seeks to make the town a more integrated and vibrant community, based in the Redburn Community Centre, Holywood. Robin Masefield previously compiled and edited ‘Twixt Bay and Burn’, a history of Helen’s Bay and Crawfordsburn, published by the Bayburn Historical Society in 2011. In 1994 he published ‘Oriental and Other Expresses’, an account of his travels by train in India, Pakistan and overland from Hong Kong through China, Mongolia and Siberia. • ‘Be Careful, Don’t Rush’ is on sale for £10 at a range of local outlets in Holywood and Bangor, and along the line. Copies can also be obtained at cost price plus postage direct from the author, email rmasefield@hotmail.com or phone 07966 589091.

Her Majesty's Royal Marines to join over 600 performers for this year's Belfast Tattoo

The band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, world-renowned for its musicianship and precision marching, has been confirmed as the headline act for this year's Belfast Tattoo in September.



Now in its third year, the Odyssey Arena show-piece on Friday September 4 and Saturday September 5 (two shows) features more than 600 performers.

And it will again showcase many of the finest marching and competing bands, musicians and dancers from across Ulster and beyond in a two-hour show building up to the massed pipe and drums grand finale.

The full line-up is confirmed as:

- The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines (UK)
- Drum and Showband Adest Musica (Netherlands)
- The Ravens Drum and Bugle Corps (Ireland)
- Storici Sbandieratori Delle Contrade Di Cori (Italy)
- Bleary and District Pipe Band (Northern Ireland)
- Killeen Pipe Band (Northern Ireland)
- Drumlough Pipe Band (Northern Ireland)
- Thiepval Memorial Pipe Band (Ireland)
- 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment Pipe Band (Northern Ireland)
- Calgary Police Service Pipe Band (Canada)
- Brookeborough Flute Band (Northern Ireland)
- Lisburn Young Defenders Flute Band (Northern Ireland)
- The Belfast Tattoo Highland and Irish Dancers



The three separate shows take place on Friday September 4 at 8pm and then on Saturday (2.30pm matinee) and 8pm. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased via phone or online from:

- **Odyssey Box Office** (phone 028 9073 9074 or click on www.odysseyarena.com)
- **Ticketmaster** (phone 0844 2774455 or click on www.ticketmaster.ie)
- **The Belfast Tattoo** (phone 028 90313131 or click on www.belfasttattoo.com)



Other highlights for the 2015 Belfast Tattoo include an 80-strong dance troupe of highland dancers and Irish dancers, performing to a piece of music specially written for the event.

This year also sees the introduction of a matinee performance on Saturday afternoon, and a family ticket is also available to purchase for the Matinee. "The Tattoo contain a packed list of international as well as local performers and really has something for all the family," the organisers say.

"It will be a genuine spectacle featuring the playing of bagpipes, drums, brass and flute bands, precision marching, the style and grace of highland and Irish dancers, and exciting displays from a range of top European performers."

Here is a snapshot of just some of the performers at this year's Belfast Tattoo:

- **HM Royal Marines Band Scotland** - These versatile and talented musicians play all over Scotland and the north of England, and their recent ceremonial duties include provision of the military music at the launch of the last of the Daring class destroyers, HMS Duncan, at Scotstoun, and the commissioning of the submarine HMS Astute at Faslane. The inclusion of the drum corps brings movement, colour and a flavour of the ceremonial and state occasions of which Royal Marines bands are such an integral part. This ensures that the grand spectacle of the traditional

concert finale is presented as a fitting climax with appropriate pomp and drama.

- **Drum and Showband Adest Musica** from Sassenheim in the Netherlands was founded in 1952. In the beginning, the association consisted of a harmony orchestra only, and later a drum and rhythm section was added. The harmony orchestra ceased in 1963 but the drum section continued to flourish. Copper instruments including trumpets, trombones, euphoniums and sousaphones were introduced with the orchestra growing into its present form. With its high level and spectacular shows, the band always leaves an unforgettable impression

with the spectators. Their uniforms, copied from the Dutch Royal Grenadiers, add to the impressive view as well.

- **The Ravens Drum & Bugle Corps** was set up in June 2008 to give the children of the community of Athlone to obtain a skill in music and the marching arts. The Ravens have a diverse group of children from all ages and backgrounds who come together as one musical unit. Their first performance was in 2008. The following year they competed in the Junior section of the Marching Band Association competition, and took home the All-Ireland title. The next four years would see them take the title of Champions Of Ireland. In 2010 they



represented Ireland in the European finals in Holland. Last year they made history again as the first band from Ireland to compete in the Drum Corps International Finals held in the USA.

• **Historical Flag Wavers Of Contrada Di Cori (Italy)** was formed in 1986. Taking their cue from the local holidays, mentioned as far back as the 16th Century, and linked to traditions in folklore, their display is rich in colour. By virtue of their magnificent Renaissance costumes, sounds and games admirable and imaginative than the flag-waving, they can create a magical atmosphere.

• **Pipes & Drums 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment.** As Northern Ireland's only infantry army reserve battalion, 2 R Irish forms part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, the UK's high-readiness early entry force. 1 R Irish has four companies located across Northern Ireland with their headquarters in Portadown, A Company in Belfast, B Company in Newtownabbey & C Company in Armagh & Enniskillen. The battalion currently has a mortar platoon and a machine gun platoon in addition to the normal infantry platoons. 2 R Irish has a proud record of achievement in supporting the regular army on operational tours to Afghanistan, Iraq and Cyprus. The battalion also mobilised personnel for the London 2012 Summer Olympics. In 2013, a platoon trained in Kenya, and further overseas training included Italy and Spain.

• **Calgary Police Service Pipe Band (Canada)** - since its first public performance leading the 1975 Calgary Stampede Parade, the band has represented the City of Calgary and the Calgary Police Service by performing across Canada, the United States and Europe. It is made up of serving and retired police officers as well as civilian members. All members volunteer their own time to practice and perform. Today the band has more than 50 pipers, drummers, and dancers and continues to perform annually at a wide variety of events including Calgary Police Service functions, municipal and provincial events, parades, and highland games. The band performs in Belfast with the permission of it Colonel-In-Chief, Rick Hanson.



Spring Gatherin'

launches in Belfast's Ramada Plaza with three days of piping and drumming

By Gary McDonald

The inaugural Spring Gatherin' piping & drumming festival, held over three days in the plush surroundings of Belfast's Ramada Plaza Hotel, was a new, fresh and vibrant addition to the piping and drumming calendar. And despite a number of hiccups not of the organisers' making, promoters have vowed to return "bigger and even more spectacular" in 2016. Indeed public funding has already been secured for next year's event, while there have been several requests from private and corporate sponsors as to how they can work with the Spring Gatherin' going forward. The Gatherin' was based loosely on its Canadian equivalent Winter Storm, and featured a series of more than 30 events over the three days. These included invitational piping and drumming events, master-classes, showpiece performances from leading competition bands as well as non-competing ensembles, and concert offering from the likes of the Ulster-Scots Agency juvenile pipe band, under Andy McGregor. The entire hotel and function rooms were taken over by the piping and drumming community to celebrate their music and talents, and the Gatherin' took place amid huge acclaim from those who took part and who came along to support. The programme began on Friday night



with the invitational drumming solo event won by Mikey McKenna from St Laurence O'Toole (any of the five percussionists could have taken the spoils). The secret judging element worked. The modest audience was equally impressed by the two non-competing pipe bands in Lisbeg from Ballygawley and Drumlough from Rathfriland, bands which combined youth, experience, commitment and passion. The Saturday brought sumptuous performances from four of Ireland's top bands in Bleary & District, Manorcunningham, Thiepval Memorial and PSNI. Indeed such was the interest that within 24 hours their performances had been viewed nearly 20,000 times - an

audience that longer-established organisations would salivate over. Saturday night's invitational solo piping was as accomplished as anything you'd hear (Gordon Walker won), and Sunday's highlights included a master class and performances from piping genius that is Fred Morrison.

Colin Wasson of organisers Dalriada said: "It was clear that the event is a much needed addition to the calendar of the pipers and drummers in Ireland and beyond, with

its laid back style and proximity to its audience the atmosphere created by this mix was appealing to all.

"It also became apparent there was a desire from bands and dance groups outside the world of piping to be included in such an event and create a hub which all genres could buy into and enjoy."

He added: "As an organisation we will now take time to reflect on all of the feedback we took away from Spring Gatherin' this year and will make our announcements in the coming weeks. But one thing is for sure - The Spring Gatherin' will take place next year and beyond."

:: Gary McDonald writes the weekly Piping Digest column in the *Irish News*.



The Cherry and the Dandelion

By Frank Ferguson

As spring unfolds around us once again and the blossoming of flowers, trees and shrubs begin to suggest that summer might come back shortly, we might turn to other countries and cultures which celebrate their national flowers.

In Japan, the reappearance of the cherry blossom, sakura, has by now taken place. Viewed as profoundly emblematic of new life, as well the fleeting quality of beauty and existence, the Japanese have elevated the appreciation of their national symbol to an art form with parties, events and picnics arranged to coincide with the blossom season as it makes its transit across the islands.

Of course such lavish appreciation of the natural world has come in for criticism. In the 19th century the critic John Ruskin coined the term 'pathetic fallacy', criticising writers for going too far and denoting nature as having human characteristics. Frustrated by the growing sentimentalism around him in art and literature he wanted painters and writers to be more honest and inventive in their work in order to strive to say something authentic. Sentimentality is something that is often

too prevalent in Scots and Ulster-Scots writing. From J.M. Barrie to our own Archibald M'Ilroy no stone is left unturned if there may be a tear to be wrung out of it. Yet, even at their most lachrymose, there appears some hint of knowledge of life that may come from being so attuned to the local environment.

Living so close to nature would seem to have imbued our writers with a heightened sensitivity to their sense of place, and provided a raised emotional receptivity to natural beauty. As Burns claims in 'To a Mouse' there is a social union between people and nature, which if severed can lead to pain and sorrow. In this union however, writers can grasp the deep, albeit ephemeral, beauty of the natural world. Burns's Tam O Shanter, in four lines as elegantly poised as any sakura haiku, suggests:

*But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white-then melts for ever...*

However Scottish literature also proffers a world far removed from Kailyard sentiment. In George Douglas Brown's brilliant mordant novel *The House with the Green Shutters* people and nature are set

far apart from each other spiritually and emotionally, even when placed together in such stifling proximity:

The brake swung on through merry cornfields where reapers were at work, past happy brooks flashing to the sun, through the solemn hush of ancient and mysterious woods, beneath the great white-moving clouds and blue spaces of the sky. And amid the suave enveloping greatness of the world the human pismires stung each other and were cruel, and full of hate and malice and a petty rage.

In Ulster, the world of blossom is noted and praised by James Orr in his poem "To the Potatoe" and a whole catalogue of local blossoms are praised, beans, peas, plum but the crown going to the potato flower:

*Bright blooms the Bean that scents the valley,
An' bright the Pea, that speels the salie,
An' bright the Plumb tree, blossom't brawly,
An' blue-bowed lint;
But what wi' straughtrais'traws can tally,
That sun-beams tint.*

Even the lesser lights of our flora have received their own praise poems. John Stevenson wrote the following to the

dandelion and it must be said with more than a little versifying that might have irritated Mr Ruskin:

*Ye're no' a beauty - 'deed ye're not,
But it's an honest face ye've got,
And so ye'll hae a sang;*

*I like that braw, big, yellow heid,
Although ye're but an ugly weed
Unless folk ca' ye wrang*

*But weed or no, one thing I ken,
There's muckle ye can teach us men,
Or I am much mistaen...*

Here too, we gain an honest appreciation of that wayside perennial hated by the gardener. While its flower may never catch the heart or imagination as profusely as the poignant ten day span of the cherry, it has its own message of understanding life and the passage of time:

*O dear, auld, ugly, yellow bloom!
I'll never grudge your bit o' room
For life for you is rough,*

*And when ye'er auld yerheid is grey
Just as my ain will be some day
If I leevelang enough.*

Piping news...

Annual Irvine Memorial pipe band concert raises £500 for the British Heart Foundation



Irvine Memorial pipe band based in Clabby, Co Fermanagh, held their annual concert in the Wesleyan Hall in Fivemiletown, which had a Ulster Scots/Gospel flavour. Compere for the evening was Gary Wilson, who is also coordinator for Heart Foundation, and his appeal at the end of the concert saw £500.86 raised for the charity.

Brunswick enjoys success at accordion championships



Young people who are taking part in the Ulster-Scots Agency's Music & Dance programme helped Brunswick Accordion Band from Annalong secure victories at the recent Northern Ireland Accordion Championships.

The band were making a welcome return to the local competition scene after an absence of almost a decade, and gained first place in the intermediate marching band section with both their test piece and own

choice performances. Brunswick were also placed second in the intermediate sacred section and secured the overall top prize for marching band percussion on the day. The band members hope to continue their development and plan to take part in further local competitions later this year. Tuition classes are ongoing on Tuesday evenings in Annalong Orange Hall where new accordionists and percussionists will receive a warm welcome.

Whitelaw Reid Memorial Lecture recalls 18th century emigration from Ulster to America

The fourth Annual Whitelaw Reid Memorial lecture, hosted by the Ulster-Scots Agency, took place at the end of April, with guest speaker Billy Kennedy and US Consul General Gregory S. Burton among those in attendance.

During the lecture the Agency launched a new historical booklet, which has been compiled and edited by Billy Kennedy, and upon which the lecture was based. Billy Kennedy took the opportunity to inform attendees about the challenges facing the Scots-Irish upon arriving in America and famous Scots-Irish and the contribution they have made to the USA today. The lecture was highly informative and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended the event in a year that will see Billy celebrate the 20th anniversary of his first book publication.

Here is a short excerpt from the lecture: *Emigration from Ulster to America in the 18th century was a major historical movement, with the great majority of folk who trekked across the Atlantic Ocean in this period of dissenting Presbyterian stock. This dogged, determined and restless people, who became known as the Ulster-Scots and when they arrived in America the Scots-Irish,*



Bill Smith (Magus), US Consul General Gregory S. Burton, Ian Crozier (chief executive of the Ulster-Scots Agency) and Billy Kennedy

had moved to the north of Ireland in large numbers from lowland and central Scotland in the 17th century Scottish Plantation. They settled mainly in counties Antrim, Londonderry, Tyrone, Donegal and Down, but many in this diaspora felt the urge to move westwards for an entirely new life in

the 'New World'.

By the end of the 18th century, the Scots-Irish (Ulster-Scots) had become among the most influential of the white population in America. Native-born and first, second and third generation Ulstermen rose to become American Presidents, statesmen,

churchmen, soldiers, academics, musicians and leaders of civic society.

The contribution they made in creating a civilisation out of a wilderness and establishing cities and towns on the 18th century American frontier was a remarkable achievement.



- The booklet is entitled *Ulster Scots who created the distinctive American psyche* and is available from the Discover Ulster Scots Visitor Centre or by emailing info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk
- A range of Billy Kennedy's books are available from the Discover Ulster Scots bookshop at 1-9 Victoria Street, Belfast.

Discover Ulster Scots website now online...

The new Discover Ulster-Scots website at www.discoverulsterscots.com, which has been developed to provide tourists and locals alike with information on the key sites related to Ulster- Scots across Ulster, has gone live.

The site is a partnership project between the Ulster-Scots Agency and the MAG Ulster-Scots Academy to support the new Discover Ulster-Scots visitor centre and ongoing tourism projects across the country.

It will point users to other tourism products developed by the Ulster-Scots Agency, the Ulster-Scots Community Network and the MAG Ulster-Scots Academy, in partnership with other sector bodies – resources such as tourism trails, heritage signage and Ulster-Scots visitor attractions.

The website provides users with a modern, integrated digital experience incorporating social media channels such as Vimeo, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter and Eventbrite, providing a cohesive one stop shop for all Ulster-Scots related tourism products.

The Agency's chief executive Ian Crozier said: "The new Discover Ulster-Scots website provides a modern interface between the tourism industry and historical Ulster-Scots sites allowing information to be accessed through a single source.

"It will integrate the information contained within the Discover Ulster-Scots Visitor Centre and provide a 21st century global experience for those wanting to know more about our rich cultural heritage."

Bill Smith, chairman of MAG Ulster-Scots Academy, added: "The MAG Ulster-Scots Academy has been glad to work with the Ulster-Scots Agency to develop this website.

"We believe that it will open up Ulster-Scots places, stories and attractions for people eager to explore the fascinating history on our doorstep."

There are currently 20 locations of Ulster-Scots significance available on the website, but this figure will grow to 40 sites by the end of the year.



RECIPES

COOKING WITH JUDITH McLAUGHLIN



Sweet potato, leek, bacon with Irish Cheddar Quiche...

THE STORY:

Leeks and bacon have to be two of my favorite ingredients to cook with and adding a sweet potato is my Southern twist and the results make a very moist and delicious combination.

INGREDIENTS

(Baked pie shell)

- 1 ¾ cups all purpose flour (sifted)
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 7 Tbsp unsalted butter (chilled)
- 2-4 Tbsp ice cold water

(filling)

- 5 slices of apple wood smoked bacon
- 1 medium leek (use mainly white part)
- 4 large eggs (beaten)
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1 sweet potato (cooked and mashed)
- ¼ tsp fine sea salt
- 1/8 tsp white pepper
- 1 ½ cups Dubliner cheese



HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. To make pastry combine flour and salt in a medium size bowl or food processor. Use a pastry fork or processor to cut in the butter until it resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over the iced water 1 Tbsp at a time and mix until the dough is moist enough to hold together to form a ball. Flatten in to a disc and wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
2. On a lightly floured surface roll out dough in to a circle about 11 inches in diameter for a 9" pie plate or fluted tart pan. Trim off any excess pastry and prick the bottom of the dough with a fork.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. To prevent over browning, line pastry with a double layer of foil and bake for 10 minutes. Remove foil and bake pastry for a few more minutes until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool on a wire rack and leave oven on.
4. To make filling in a large skillet cook bacon until crispy. Remove bacon and fat, reserving 2 Tbsp to sauté leeks for 3-4 minutes or until soft and fragrant and remove from heat.
5. In a food processor or mixing bowl combine eggs, cream, mashed sweet potato, salt and pepper.
6. To assemble the quiche layer the leeks and bacon, cheese and then pour over the egg mixture.
7. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the egg sets and is firm to the touch.
8. Allow quiche to sit for at least 15mins before serving.

18,000 expected at new venue for 2015 CountrySports Fair

The Ulster Scots Agency will again have a prominent presence at this year's Northern Ireland CountrySports Fair, being held at Scarvagh House in Co Armagh on June 6 & 7.

In addition to the anticipated 18,000-plus spectators, more than 120 exhibitors from across Ireland and Great Britain are confirmed for the 2015 event.

The competitive nature of fair – which includes gun dog trials, clay pigeon shooting and equestrian events – will also see in excess of 1,000 competitors travel to participate across 85 different classes.

The fair, previously held in Moira, is managed and directed by Derek Lutton, who has over 20 years' experience of delivering events of this type.

"The appeal of the Northern Ireland CountrySports Fair is far reaching, attracting visitors and competitors from Northern Ireland and far beyond," he said.

"There is no doubt that it provides a real boost to tourism at a local level by positively impacting on businesses and service providers in

You can expect to find all the usual game fair activities going on, and there will be a brand new set of equestrian events that this year will act as a qualifier for the Dublin Horse Show at the RDS.

the Armagh area.

"Our new home at Scarvagh House provides the perfect platform to build on the success of the past and further boost the potential for all involved."

He added: "Those who were familiar with the National CountrySports Fair at Moira will find this is a similarly styled event. "Scarvagh House, with its 18th century house and extensive grounds, woodlands and lakes, is the ideal setting for the NI CountrySports Fair.

"You can expect to find all the usual game fair activities going on, and there will be a brand new set of equestrian events that this year will act as a qualifier for the Dublin Horse Show at the RDS.

"There will be a superb range of trade stands including country lifestyle, country clothing and accessories, artisan food & produce

and crafts and rural life displays.

"This is a day for all the family, with all ages catered for in our have-a-go activities, such as our ever-popular pet shows. We have a dedicated family area and there is something for everyone in our action-packed two-day main arena programme. We hope to see you there!" From an Ulster-Scots viewpoint, there will be performances over the two days by Risin Stour, Down and Out Bluegrass Band, Cup O'Joe, Chanter and Highland Dancers from the Michelle Johnston School of Dance.

There'll also be soda bread making, live music, dressing up for kids and historical re-enactments as part of the Agency display at the festival. **For more information go to www.countrysportsfairs.com or follow on Facebook at [facebook.com/countrysportsfairs](https://www.facebook.com/countrysportsfairs) and Twitter: twitter.com/csairs**

**Northern Ireland
COUNTRYSPO RTS
FAIR**
at Scarvagh House

NI Countrysports Fair Scarvagh House

Sat 6th & Sun 7th June

Admission £10 www.countrysportsfairs.com

NEW BIGGER VENUE
UNDER 12s GO FREE
FREE CAR PARKING

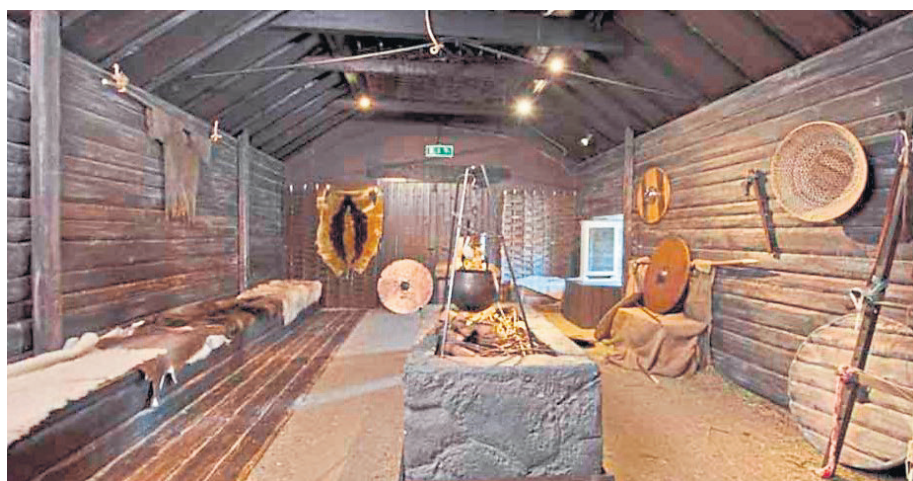
Place to Visit

A snapshot of the past at North Down Museum

Located in the heart of Bangor, North Down Museum packs a lot into a small space, documenting the fascinating history of this area from the Bronze Age through to the present day.

With a host of exhibitions and events, it's a must visit for the whole family this summer. North Down Museum has the only complete Folio of Plantation Maps in Ireland, the Raven Maps (see Page 3 for more). These have been digitised and you can see the digitised maps with their additional content and the originals in the museum's Plantation Room. Meanwhile one of the museum's most popular collections is the local photographic archive, providing a visual insight into Bangor's past. As well as permanent exhibitions, a special exhibition documenting the outbreak of the Great War runs until Thursday May 28.

The museum's shop offers a range of family learning activities, games, toys, and souvenirs as well as a selection of books on local and historical topics. Tickets for



Ards and North Down Arts Events may also be purchased from the Museum Shop, or online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/visitstrangfordlough

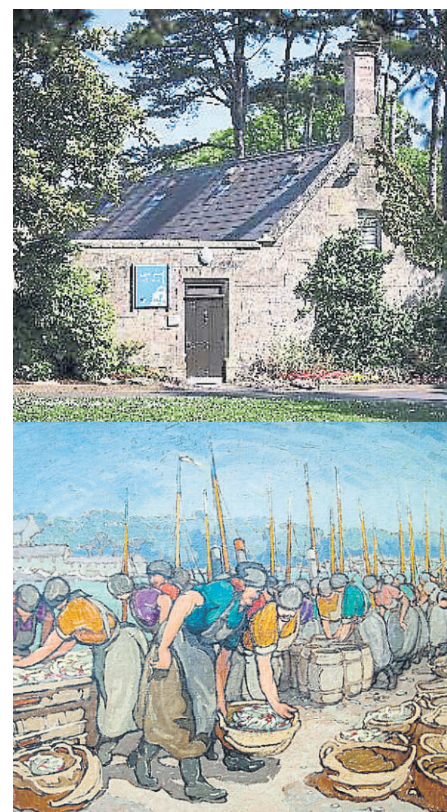
Afterwards you can enjoy some time out in Coffee Cure at the Museum. This relaxing space offers freshly made tea and coffee, lunch and snacks for visitors. Meanwhile special menus are available at certain times of the year, such as Easter and Mothers' Day. For further information or to reserve

a table please phone the cafe on 028 9127 8050.

The museum is open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10am to 4:30pm and Sundays from 12 noon to 4:30pm. The museum is also open on Mondays in July and August.

The museum is accessible for disabled visitors.

For more information go online at www.northdownmuseum.com



Castleblayney school completes Flagship programme



Castleblayney Central School has become the fifth school overall - and just the second in the Republic of Ireland - to successfully complete the prestigious Ulster-Scots Flagship programme.

They were presented with their award after the school's recent performance of Dan Gordon's "Boat Factory".

Castleblayney school principal Mrs Iris Kirkland has been involved with the Agency for some time now and has led the staff and pupils of the school to the success. After the presentation she said: "The children really enjoyed the drama workshops and having an opportunity to perform in front of family and friends. "On behalf of everyone at the Central School we extend our thanks and appreciation to the

Ulster-Scots Agency for all the help and support we have received in the past. We look forward to continuing and developing our involvement with the Agency." In attendance at the performance in Castleblayney were members of the Ulster-Scots Agency board including Dr Tony Crooks and Mrs Hilary Singleton, as well as agency staff Trina Somerville (director of education and language) and Gary Blair (education officers).



WEANS' WURLD**the Ulster-Scot COMPETITION**

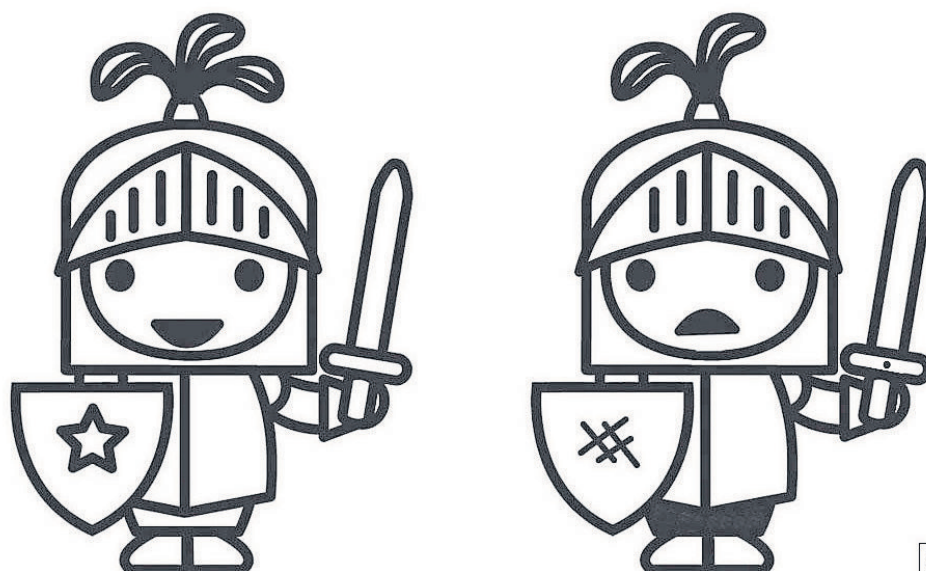
WIN
ONE OF TWO FAMILY
PASSES TO THE NI
COUNTRYSPOrts FAIR
AT SCARVAGH HOUSE
(CO ARMAGH)
TAKING PLACE
JUNE 6 - JUNE 7 2015

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE COMPETITION

To be in with a chance, simply circle the **SIX** differences between our friendly knights below and send your entry (including name, age, address and home telephone number) to:

The Ulster-Scots Agency,
The Corn Exchange,
31 Gordon Street,
Belfast,
BT1 2LG

CLOSING DATE:
WEDNESDAY MAY 27



6

LAST ISSUE'S WINNERS

Winners of the colouring competition for the family passes to the St Patrick's Centre in Downpatrick are:

Annie Convery from Portglenone (aged 4) and Catherine McCaffrey from Trillick (aged 6)

Well done to the girls and we hope you enjoy your visit to the St Patrick's Centre!

