

Lecale News

Bulletin of the Lecale Historical Society

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www.lecalehistory.co.uk

September 2008

~ Programme of Events for 2008 ~

The 2008-09 Programme of the Society's events is enclosed with this newsletter. The lectures cover a wide range of topics with a particular focus on Lecale and should be of interest to members.

Meetings are held in Down County Museum (except October and June) at 7.30pm on the third Monday of each month. The St.Patrick's Festival Lecture in March is on the second Monday to coincide with the rest of the Festival.

The Programme also gives details of the new Executive Committee for the coming year.

Attendances were good last year and we look forward to seeing you throughout the coming year.

Opening Lecture:

A Century of Photographs

Our season begins on **Monday, 15th September** when Lesley Simpson of Down Museum will give an illustrated lecture on the Museum's Photographic Archive. The Archive includes over 10,000 images of Downpatrick and east Down created by the late D J McNeill.

F J Bigger in Ardglass

In the last few years the Committee has tried to broaden the appeal of the Society throughout Lecale by staging some talks outside Downpatrick. Meetings have been held in Killough, Dundrum, Ardglass and Strangford. In October we return to Ardglass for a very special meeting.

The meeting on **Monday, 20th October** will be held at 7.30pm in the Presbyterian Hall, Hill Street, Ardglass (turn right at cross roads if coming from Downpatrick).

Roger Dixon, the Librarian of National Museums Northern Ireland will speak on *F J Bigger, Ireland's Cultural Crusader*.

Bigger was a celebrated figure a century ago who purchased and restored Jordan's Castle in Ardglass.

Launch of Lecale Review 2008

In November the launch takes place of the sixth *Lecale Review*, the Society's journal, which records and encourages interest in our local history.

The Chairman of Down District Council, Councillor Colin McGrath, will be speaker at the Review launch on **Monday, 17th November**. The evening will include musical entertainment and supper. This is a special evening for members to bring along friends and guests to take part in the occasion.

The *Lecale Review 2008* is free to members (one copy per subscription) and additional copies will be available at £7 per copy.

Federation for Ulster Local Studies

The Federation has been working with our sister Federation in the Republic of Ireland to identify areas of mutual interest in the development of local history and studies. One of these is a joint event in September to visit Tara and the newly opened Boyne Centre.

A second project is to involve Societies in identifying interesting but lesser known places and people; places that don't make it on to the tourist circuit but which have some local historical interest or significance. Also, there will be local knowledge of men and women who have made a significant contribution locally or more widely but whom time has largely forgotten. The intention is to compile a number of these into either a booklet, a CD or place them on a website.

Below is an example of the sort of thing we have in mind.

We would welcome suggestion of places and/or people for consideration. Suggestions should be sent to Patrick Devlin, 18 Ardmore Avenue, Downpatrick BT30 6JU, or by email to info@fuls.org.uk.



CARRICKFERGUS AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



HANGING GATE, CARRICKFERGUS

Located on Antrim St. adjacent to the Town Hall, Carrickfergus.

People entering or leaving the Town Hall would not necessarily realize the significance of this gate. The current Town Hall was built in 1789 as the County of Antrim Courthouse and associated Jail, former site of Joymount Palace (1610) and Franciscan Friary (1240). This was a place to execute some miscreants with a rope secured from the top of the archway. Many of the locals were given time off to witness the hangings. The last public hanging was in 1844 of a young soldier. Ordinary felons were hanged here but celebrities like William Orr were hanged at the Gallows Green site because if the victim cursed the Town the curse would not pass over the water of the Woodburn River between Gallows Green and the Town.

The new edition of *Due North*, the journal of the Federation for Ulster Local Studies will be published on 4 September. The Lecale Historical Society helped to rescue the Federation last year when it was threatened with closure following the loss of central funding.

This publication signals the return to business as usual. The cost of the journal is £3.75 including postage. Copies will be available at the first Society meeting on 15 September, or you can order from Pat Devlin at 028 44612986 or info@fuls.org.uk

Forthcoming Events:

Sat 27 September, 10.00am-4.00pm FAMILY HISTORY FAIR, Downpatrick Library

Tues 30 September, 7.30pm SETTING UP A FAMILY HISTORY WEBSITE – Talk by Pat Devlin in Downpatrick Library

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Berkley Farr,