
INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND NEWSLETTER

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Diary dates

10	Nov	Delving the Records: Discovering Mining History (MHTI)
24	Nov	IHAI visit to Ulster Folk & Transport Museum, Cultra

Although Foot & Mouth persists in parts of England, things are back to reasonable normality here as regards fieldwork and visits to the countryside. The rescheduled IHAI fieldtrip took place in surprisingly mild weather in late September - who will forget that glorious Sunday afternoon at the end of the Fintown line ! Because of our enforced lack of activity, a one-day 'special' to the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum has been arranged for late November. Even if the mild weather doesn't persist, the indoor nature of the visit should ensure that we make the most of the day. The next *Newsletter* is planned for early February, when next year's programme will be announced. If you have an idea for an event, please make it known to any Committee member. Meanwhile, enjoy Christmas - according to the advertisers, it's with us already!

Delving the Records: Discovering Mining History

The Mining History Society of Ireland has been reformed as a charitable limited-liability company - the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland. One of its first initiatives is a seminar on the interpretation and presentation of mining history, to be held at the Geological Survey of Ireland, Beggars Bush, Haddington Rd, Dublin 4. It will be held on Saturday 10 November, starting at 10.30am (with coffee from 10am). A panel of speakers will give those with no experience of historical research a flavour of it, using actual examples.

The first issue of the *MHTI Journal* will also be launched at this event by Ruth Delany (representing the Heritage Council). Please notify Matthew Parkes if you plan to attend - tel 01-6041493, email matthewparkes@gsi.ie. You can also find out about other MHTI initiatives at www.mhti.ie.

IHAI Visit to Ulster Folk & Transport Museum

The IHAI is organising a trip to the UFTM on Saturday 24 November. The plan is to travel from Dublin to Belfast by train, then change to the Bangor line and disembark at Cultra (adjoining the museum). The timetable is as follows: depart Dublin 07.40, arrive Belfast 09.45; depart Belfast 09.54, arrive Cultra 10.10. For the return journey, depart Cultra 17.03, arrive Belfast 17.20; depart Belfast 18.10, arriving back in Dublin 20.15.

The Museum has two indoor transport galleries - both well lit and heated - and an outdoor collection of vernacular buildings (not so well serviced). Our visit will focus on the transport collection, but there will also be the opportunity to visit the folk museum as well (see below).

The Irish Railway Collection tells the story of over 150 years of railway history. Steam locos (both passenger and industrial), passenger carriages and goods wagons are combined with extensive railway memorabilia and interactive displays. The star attraction is *Maedb*, built at Inchicore and the largest and most powerful steam loco to have operated in Ireland. Those of you who travelled the Fintown line during our Donegal fieldtrip might also be interested to see *Blanche* and other items of Co Donegal Railway rolling stock.

Alongside the Railway Gallery is the new Road Transport Gallery. This boasts an extensive collection of cycles, motorcycles, trams, buses and cars. Exhibitions also show the development of road transport and the impact it has had on our lives. In addition, there are displays on maritime and aviation transport, including the Titanic Exhibition and the Flight Experience (a cockpit simulator).

After lunch, there will be an opportunity to visit the Folk Museum's three watermills: a scutch mill, spade mill (with two waterwheels) and corn mill.

As a bonus, Ewan Duffy has prepared field notes on the various rail-related features which you'll glimpse from your carriage window at you hurtle towards Belfast. As many of you know, the route takes in both the Boyne and Craigmore viaducts, arguably the two most impressive railway bridges in Ireland. Moira also boasts the oldest surviving railway station in Ulster (1840); it is now preserved as an industrial monument by Environment & Heritage Service.

The standard Dublin-Bangor return fare is IR£24, but senior citizens travel free. Entry charges to the museum (in £ sterling) are: adults £4/ senior citizens £2.50. There's a 10% discount if we can muster 15 or more in our group. Lunch and snack facilities are available at the Museum.

If you wish to go on this trip, please contact Ron Cox or Ewan Duffy by **Wednesday 21 Nov** so that a group ticket can be arranged (subject to a minimum number of non-concession travellers) and sufficient copies of the notes prepared. The rendezvous point will be the entrance foyer to Connolly St Station from 0715 onwards. You can, of course, embark elsewhere along the line - Drogheda 08.13, Dundalk 08.35, Newry 08.53, and Portadown 09.14. Those travelling on the Belfast - Bangor section only or who wish to meet up at Cultra should contact Fred Hamond (tel Belfast 9061 6480).

Why not bring your spouse as well? Leave them off at Belfast for a Christmas shopping frenzy (free shuttle bus service to City Centre), and meet up again on your way back?

Natural and Cultural Landscapes: the Geological Foundation

This conference, organised by the Royal Irish Academy and the Geological Surveys of Ireland and Northern Ireland, will be held on 9-11 September 2002. One of the many issues to be addressed is mining and the management of the landscapes

resulting from such exploitation. The registration fee is a very reasonable 130 euros up to 9 June 2002/ 160 euros thereafter (also student concessions). There will also be pre- and post-conference excursions to the Wicklows, Boyne Valley, Ulster and the Burren (at extra cost). To receive further information, write to the RIA National Committee for Geology, 19 Dawson St, Dublin 2; alternatively checkout www.landscapes@ria.ie.

IHAI Field Trip to East Donegal

The trip was led by Fred Hamond, who has recently carried out extensive recording of industrial sites in East Donegal. We thus had ready access to systematic information and this proved indispensable for gauging the changes wrought in as little as a few years in the condition of the monuments. The fragility of this heritage, the greater part of which is modest railway features and small mills and their ancillaries, became apparent at one of the first sites we visited.

At Ballyraine, the former port for Letterkenny on the eastern outskirts of the town, is a disused and ruinous level crossing with one surviving abutment of the bridge which carried the Strabane-Letterkenny line over the road. Stone warehouses associated with the port had recently been demolished to make for road widening for a traffic roundabout. Curiously, the buildings are mentioned in at least one local tourist guide. The loss of most of the railway buildings and structures at Letterkenny (and again at Stranorlar) was regretted by the group. The county's largest town would appear to be clearing away its industrial heritage. What would remain in a few years time in this boomtown?

A startling contrast is Ramelton, founded in the Plantation era. It was recently made an Architectural Conservation Area and, fortunately, is astonishingly intact. The quayside (which supplanted that at Letterkenny in importance) retains most of its original buildings and features. The town contains an impressive and most varied industrial heritage, including a bleach green and watch houses which guarded the precious flax. Drummonaghan mill complex on the River Lennan is a decaying but most impressive group of buildings made of stone, brick and concrete in a picturesque wooded setting and has the atmosphere of a city lost in the jungle. In contrast was Newmills, restored and operated by Dúchas, and which is loved and by all accounts well-visited. At Ballyarr is a former flax mill, now holiday houses, which presented issues about the suitability of its present function. However, it is still standing even if important items of machinery (especially its steam engine) are gone.

The extensive woollen mills at Convoy presented buildings from the 1880s up to the 1970s on an almost epic scale. The question was posed: how do we rate the latest buildings and to what degree are they to be considered as heritage?

Bridges were also visited and examined. The road bridge over the Finn River at Killygordon is a very fine multi-arched stone bridge. The merit or otherwise of spraying the underside of the arches with cement was discussed animatedly. More modest was the concrete pedestrian bridge at Ballybotemple, built in the 1930s and part of whose parapet had been washed away in floods. All agreed on the merits on this bridge and of that at Eletagh, the latter preserving its constructional formwork. At Bellanaghmore Halt, nearby, the group stood on the disused platform (now in the middle of a boggy field) and tried to imagine the trains that stopped running decades ago. A stronger sense of this railway, the Glenties branch of the

County Donegal Railway was gained at Fintown, where a local group has reopened a stretch of the line for visitors along the edge of beautiful Lough Finn.

The overall impression of East Donegal is of an area rich in industrial heritage, some of it large in scale, some of it in use or otherwise having an assured future, but the vast bulk (as is the case the length and breadth of the island) is under-appreciated, under-recorded (and can disappear even within a few years of being recorded), abandoned, and is very vulnerable to redevelopment as well as enduring the unrelenting attack of the elements.

Fred Hamond's survey work looks set to become a record of a lost heritage unless the authorities and the people of the county begin to take the built heritage seriously. The record to date would not appear to be very inspiring.

Barry O'Reilly

National Heritage Week - Shackleton's Mills Unveiled

The work of conserving this very important industrial heritage by Fingal County Council under the direction of Fionnula May, their Conservation Officer, continues unabated, *writes Norman Campion*. The first priority was to secure the mill premises and to remove any spilt grain and residual products from bins, pits and parts of the process to prevent rodent and other infestation. Then came the task of making a complete survey in order to plan the conservation of the building and the contents. This concluded that major roof repairs etc were necessary. Fingal CC employed an archivist and all the mill records are now catalogued and stored in a secure area. One find was a copy of a letter written by George Shackleton in 1911 apologising to a customer in Kildare that his six bags of bran had gone astray; he added that he was going to bill the Great Southern Railway Co for them! The late Dick Shackleton (one of our founding members) also kept meticulous records dating back to the 1880s of the three turbines.

In order to keep the public informed Fingal CC and the IHAI held an open day on Saturday 8th September as part of National Heritage Week. The mill was spick and span thanks to Joe Fortune and his team. Experienced millers explained the process and Vincent Conaghan was the turbine expert for the day. Dick would have been thrilled to be with us but was ably represented by his wife Mary. She met many old friends who were former employees and many memories were exchanged. We had anticipated an attendance of no more than 50, but got 300, of which 70% were from the Lucan area! This was a great vote of encouragement to Fingal CC and our Association to continue to develop this worthwhile project.

World Canals Conference 2001

The World Canals Conference was held on 16-18 May at Dublin Castle, the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, and at Lisburn's new Civic Centre. It was attended by delegates from the UK, USA, Canada, France, Germany, Holland and from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The conference was organised jointly by Waterways Ireland, for the Minister for Arts Heritage Gaeltacht and the Islands, and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland, assisted by the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland. The Lord Mayor of Dublin laid on a reception in the City Hall, Minister de Valera hosted a banquet in Dublin Castle, Minister

McGimpsey provided lunch in Belfast, Lisburn Urban Borough Council hosted a dinner in their new Civic Centre in Lisburn and the IWAI.

A tour of the Dublin canals was held on the Tuesday preceding the three-day conference and an all-day tour was arranged on the following Saturday. Some of the American delegates hired boats from the Royal Canal and lived aboard at Mespil Road on the Grand Canal; others hired boats for the week following the conference.

All the presentations were based around the theme of Living Heritage. Speakers sharing experiences from around the world spoke of the conflicts that arise between development and preservation, the compromises which sometimes have to be made, the use of modern materials and technology, and techniques used in the restoration of historic boats.

On the first day, restoration schemes in Ireland, the UK, France and the USA were examined and contrasted. The user experience in various parts of the world was considered and the many different recreational users of today's waterways was recognised.

On the second day, the conference moved to Belfast by special train to introduce the Northern Ireland waterways. Developments on the Lagan were viewed at Belfast and at Lisburn where boats were locked through the newly restored 12th lock for the first time since the navigation was abandoned. There were presentations on the restoration of waterways in urban settings in Holland, Germany and the UK.

On the final day, the Conference adopted a working definition of Living Heritage based on the preceding presentations, workshops and discussion: "The way this generation interacts with what we have inherited from the past to meet the needs of today in such a way that future generations can equally interact with what they inherit".

The World Canals Conference is in Canada next year and will be in Scotland in 2003 when there will be an opportunity to see the spectacular new Millennium Wheel at Falkirk linking up two ends of the restored Forth & Clyde Canal.

Ruth Delany

Mills & Millers of Ireland: the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Irish Mills

The launch of the above society took place at Skerries Mills, Skerries, Co Dublin on Saturday 6 October writes *William Hogg*. This is intended to be a broadly based society with concern and interest in both archaeological and genealogical aspects of milling and the activity, traditions and history of mill folk. The objectives of the Society are as follows:

- To unite and organise mill owners, millers and persons of genuine interest and to provide a means for expressing their collective opinions on all matters pertaining to the interests of the milling profession.
- Through affiliation with like-minded groups in Ireland and abroad, to acquire knowledge of milling and encourage a spirit of sympathy.
- To provide, where possible, assistance required for the refurbishment of mills.
- To afford advice and assistance to individual members on matters of mutual interest, eg conservation, water rights and legal aspects.

- To promote a spirit of goodwill and kinship between Society members by encouragement and arrangement of social contacts and events.
- To circulate information by means of suitable publications (eg newsletter) and make full use of modern communication systems and public media.
- To encourage the conservation of Irish mills and associated waterways and the sensitive restoration of these.
- To establish an archive and library for the purpose of research and collection of mills records, sites, personnel and artifacts.
- To liaise with State Agencies regarding listing, preservation, and protection of mills, mill sites and, where possible, to acquire aid from State or other agencies for their conservation.

IHAI Vice-Chairman Norman Campion was one of the first to enlist in the new Society. He passed on his good wishes and referred to the common interests of both organisations. There will no doubt be every reason and good opportunity for co-operation and close association. The prime force has been William Hogg (a recent addition to the IHAI Committee) and who, with the able support of a small group of mill enthusiasts, is the person who has brought about this new establishment.

Following the launch, visitors were treated to a tour of the two windmills and the watermill complex. The hospitality kindly provided by the staff at Skerries Mills did much to make the occasion both an enjoyable and satisfactory one.

The following officials were elected and can be contacted for further information. *President* - William Hogg (3 Gosworth Pk, Dalkey, Co Dublin); *Chairman* - Pdraig O'Griofa (Foyle, Tramore Rd, Ballinud, Waterford); *Secretary* - John Lynch (Mentrim Mill, Drumconrath, Co Meath; tel 041-6854426).

Register of Heritage Contractors

The Register of Heritage Contractors was launched by Minister Síle DeValera on 23 October. It contains a list of contractors with proven experience in building conservation. They have undergone an assessment process run by the Construction Industry Federation to ensure that they are bona fide contractors with adequate knowledge and experience to undertake heritage projects. This Register, which is also supported by Dúchas, OPW, Heritage Council, Irish Georgian Society and various educational institution, is open to all contracting firms that meet the criteria set by the CIF. Anyone seeking a competent contractor should checkout the Register. For further details, contact the CIF Secretary at Construction House, Canal Rd, Dublin 6 (tel 086-8049454).

Heritage Council publications grants

Advance details of these grants were reported in the last IHAI Newsletter. They have now been advertised in the *Irish Times* on 27 Oct. The closing date for applications is 7 Dec and they must be received by post on that day by 5.30pm irrespective of the postmark. No e-mails or faxes will be accepted.

For further information on the criteria and to obtain application forms, write to 2002 Heritage Grant Programme, Heritage Council, Kilkenny.

Bleach Green - Antrim Railway Reopens

Spring 2001 saw the reopening of the Bleach Green - Antrim line by Translink, the N. Ireland rail operator. It includes a 3km stretch between Bleach Green (on the Belfast-Larne line) and Monkstown which had been laid by the Northern Counties Committee of the Midland Railway in 1934. Prior to that, trains from Belfast to Antrim travelled north on the Larne line as far as Greenisland and then reversed in a south-westerly direction to Monkstown, whence they continued to Antrim. The more direct route between Bleach Green and Monkstown was hindered by Valentine's Glen, a wide valley on the Three Mile Water. Although not impossible to span with a stone viaduct, this would have been an expensive proposition. It wasn't until the 1930s, with the development of reinforced concrete, that the valley was finally spanned by the Bleach Green Viaduct, 192m long by 21m high. This new route cut 30 minutes off the journey time between Belfast and Antrim.

The line continued in use until the early 1980s. As the Greenisland - Monkstown line was long dismantled, north-bound trains from Belfast were rerouted via Lisburn, Glenavy and Crumlin - adding 30 minutes to the journey time.

Work on the £16m reinstatement of the Bleach Green line began in spring 1999 with bridge repairs. The viaduct proved to be a major challenge as it had developed 'concrete cancer' (flaking of the concrete due to rusting of the reinforcing bars). The laying of 26km of new track was completed in autumn 2000. With the erection of a new footbridge and renovation of various halts, the line is now set for future service.

Images of England

As reported in a previous Newsletter, hundreds of volunteers working under the auspices of English Heritage have been photographing England's listed buildings for the National Monuments Record. Many of these can be now viewed at www.imagesofengland.org.uk. The *Images of England Newsletter* for Summer 2001 reports an exciting new development in this long-term project, namely Public Access Trials.

The web-accessible database now boasts information on 370,000 listed buildings throughout England. This can be searched in one of three ways - quick, standard and advanced search; the latter two require on-line registration (at no cost). *Quick Search* enables the user to browser a selection of images based on basic map searches. *Standard search* enables more detailed map searches and also interrogation of the database by building type, location, period, associated people and organisations, and construction material. *Advanced Search* also permits access by street address and specific words or phrases; selected data can also be excluded.

English Heritage is keen for people to try out this new facility and submit their views. Indeed, your editor would also welcome feedback by IHAI readers as his own computer (a state of the art machine 10 years ago but obsolete 9 years 6 months ago) can't hack the graphics and high-speed Internet connections!

AER V 2001

The Republic's Department of Public Enterprise has launched a competition to secure an additional 255MW of renewable energy based on wind, hydro and biomass generation under its Alternative Energy Requirement. The AER was introduced by

the government in 1994 in an endeavour to substitute renewables for fossil fuels in energy generation and thus reduce pollutants such as CO₂ and SO₂ which would otherwise arise. Under this fifth AER scheme, the successful bidders will have the right to build, own and operate alternative energy generators and the ESB will undertake to purchase their output for up to 15 years (until the year 2018).

Of the required total, it is envisaged that up to 240MW (94%) will be contributed by wind power, 10MW by biomass and 5MW by water power. You might be puzzled by the magnitude of the wind power requirement compared with hydro power. As you will be aware, water rather than wind power was of paramount importance in the past - reflected in thousands of watermills as opposed to hundreds of windmills. However, most prime riverine sites capable of delivering significant amounts of energy have already been harnessed (eg Ardnacrusa - 86MW) and few, if any, still exist. Although most wind-electricity converters (WECs) now in use have an upper limit of 0.5MW, lots of WECs can be set up at the one site; for example, the Republic's first windmill farm, at Bellacorick, Co Mayo, has 21 WECs which yield a total of 6.5MW. Moreover, there are many worthwhile locations still to be tapped. However, the siting of WECs in scenic mountainous areas invariably attracts objections, so the granting of planning permission for their erection is by no means straightforward.

Interestingly, the working life of some early 19th century flour windmills was probably comparable with WECs, ie less than 20 years. However, given that planning permission requires the removal of WECs once decommissioned, traditional windmills will inevitably win out on the survival stakes. Given that WECs etc are a sign of our times, but relatively transient, they are surely worthy of study by the industrial archaeologist with an eye to the future. Mobile phone masts are another case in point, but that's another story (all contributions gratefully received - ED)!

PS. The deadline for AER tenders is 20 Nov 2001, so hurry!

MSc in Industrial Archaeology

The University of Bath is offering a post-graduate course in Industrial Archaeology on a one-year full-time or two-year part-time basis. It covers five themes: origins, legislation and philosophy; archaeology of traditional industries; archaeology of 18th-20th century industries; transport studies; conservation and reuse of industrial buildings. The MSc and Diploma both require attendance at lectures over two semesters; the MSc also entails a dissertation. The course is based at the Museum of the Great Western Railway and the National Monuments Record Centre, both at Swindon (from which there are high-speed train links with London). With low-cost flights from Ireland, this just about becomes a viable proposition. For further information, contact Emma Greeley, University of Bath, Dept Architecture and Civil Engineering, Bath BA2 7AY (tel 01225 826908; email E.S.J.Greeley@bath.ac.uk).

Slate Wall Query

Peter Patten e-mailed the following query: I live near West Castleton, Vermont (USA), where a settlement of Irish slate workers, many from the northwest Tipperary and Tipp/Kilkenny border region slate districts lived in the 19th century. In the vicinity are slate stone walls with horizontally stacked

slates around 3ft high, topped by jagged edged slates stacked vertically 12-18in high. During a walking tour of the area a few years back, a Vermont archaeologist claimed this type of wall construction was brought from Ireland with the immigrant quarrymen. Is there any way to confirm or refute this? Any insights would be appreciated. I can be contacted at TYRTIPP@aol.com.

REVIEWS

The Carlow Fence by Michael J Conry. Chapeltown Press Ltd, 2001. £10. ISBN 0 9535876-1-6.

This very readable book explores the background of granite walling in Co Carlow. An especially appealing aspect of it is the use of oral testimony which has greatly facilitated the author's understanding of the background to the craft and of the practicalities of stone cutting and wall building techniques. The photographs and line drawings are excellent and a model for other local studies.

Most of the walls appear to date to the 19th and early 20th centuries, dating being primarily by reference to the Ordnance Survey map editions. The classic Carlow Fence is "a very simple structure consisting of long granite lintels resting in wide vee notches cut in low granite uprights ...". Many of the surviving stretches are in demesnes and Conry speculates that the Watsons of Ballydarton House, Quakers, appear to have been the first to build a version of such a wall in the 1830s. 'Scotch' fences (built of contiguous upright granite slabs), fences of wire strung between stone uprights, and a variety of other types are also discussed, though none of these is specific to Co Carlow.

A criticism of the book is that it falls between two stools. Chapter 3, which deals with the Carlow fence proper, is more a gazetteer detailing all instances of this wall type with rather too many dimensions given. A second is that the six-item bibliography includes two books about Scottish granite but omits two much more relevant works - Nicholas Ryan's *Sparkling Granite* (1982) about stone cutting in south Co Dublin, and my own and Séamas Ó Maitiú's *Ballyknockan: a Wicklow Stonecutters' Village* (1997).

The publication of this book was supported by the Heritage Council as well as Carlow-based bodies and firms.

Barry O'Reilly

The Conservation of Scheduled Masonry Monuments: a Guidance Booklet for Owners and Builders, by Helen Hossack. Environment & Heritage Service, 2001. 32 pp.

The term 'conservation' is a widely used, but somewhat unspecific, term. In your reviewer's view it encompasses three types of physical interference with the fabric of a building or structure: restoration to a former state, adaptive reuse, and preservation in an existing, but stabilized, form. This publication, commissioned by EHS and written by a conservation architect, deals with the preservation and consolidation of Scheduled stone monuments in N. Ireland in particular. Despite its supposedly narrow focus, it will be of interest to everyone contemplating any type of conservation work on stone buildings and structures such as mills and lime kilns.

The booklet begins by setting out seven guiding principals which should govern the specification and execution of any consolidation work:

- It should only be carried out if the monument's structural stability and/or historical integrity is threatened.
- Detailed records should be made before starting any work.
- Whenever possible, fabric should be repaired rather than replaced in order to maintain its physical integrity.
- Priority should be given to consolidating the existing monument rather than restoring it to some former state.
- As far as possible, all materials should match those already in use.
- Lime putty rather than cement should be used in mortar.
- Only contractors with the necessary experience, skills and understanding of conservation work should be employed to undertake this type of work.

The practical aspects of consolidation are then outlined: preparatory works, condition assessment, determining the causes of structural instability and the drawing up of work specifications. A range of remedial techniques and the use of appropriate materials are given extended coverage. The booklet concludes with a list of dos and don'ts for owners and contractors, names/addresses of lime putty suppliers and an informative reading list.

Everyone involved is to be congratulated on a most informative publication, further copies of which can be obtained at no cost from EHS, 5-33 Hill St, Belfast BT1 2LA.

Fred Hamond

Correction

The web address reported in the June *Newsletter* for Ewan Duffy's survey of the New Ross Railway was actually his own website, not that of the Irish Railway News. The latter can be accessed at http://communities.msn.co.uk/irish_railway_news.

My thanks to Norman Campion, Ruth Delany, Ewan Duffy, William Hogg and Barry O'Reilly for their contributions to this newsletter. Please send all copy for the February issue to the editor, Fred Hamond, at the address below.

IHAI Committee, 2001-2002

- ◆ *President:* Ron Cox, Centre for Engineering Heritage, Museum Building Trinity College, Dublin (01-6082544; e-mail rcox@tcd.ie).
- ◆ *Vice-Chairman:* Norman Campion, Inver, 1 Kilgobbin Rd, Sandyford, Dublin 18 (01-2942981).
- ◆ *Secretary:* Ewan Duffy, 64 Grange Village, Mullingar, Co Westmeath (087-9804134)
- ◆ *Treasurer:* Dan Hurst, 27 Churchview Drive, Killiney, Co Dublin (01-2854640).
- ◆ *Membership Secretary:* Dermot McNamara, 95 Bulfin Rd, Dublin 8 (01-4535827).
- ◆ *Web:* Cormac Scally, 114 Marlborough Pk Central, Belfast 9 (048-90209735; e-mail cormac.scally@ntlworld.com).
- ◆ *Newsletter:* Fred Hamond, 75 Locksley Pk, Belfast BT10 OAS (048-90616480; e-mail fred.hamond@lineone.net).
- ◆ *Committee members:* Vincent Conaghan (01-4514784), Ruth Delany (01-2852258), Colm Donnelly (048-9094 7552), Robert Guinness (01-6273155), William Hogg, Mary McMahon (01-8334709), Paul McMahon (01-6761022), Ian McQuiston (048-9146 2880), Barry O'Reilly (052-32254), Colin Rynne (021-4821496), and Mary Sleeman.