



TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2024 FOR THE CHARITIES COMMISSION OF NORTHERN IRELAND

NMA IS DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION
OF THE HISTORY OF THE PORT OF NEWRY

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: NIC 100431

COMPILED BY JAMES MC AREVEY.

Our Cover Photo



The striking image of Haulbowline lighthouse featured on our front cover was captured by the talented photographer, Ann Bruen, a native of Omeath, Co. Louth.

As someone who was raised close to Carlingford Lough, it comes as no surprise that Ann has a deep empathy with the waterway, which features strongly in her portfolio. We were very pleased when she permitted us to use the image as our cover photo. We have also used this iconic photo to create a digital image of the lighthouse installed on the new section of Greenway at Victoria Lock. Other examples of Ann's work were awarded to deserving individuals at our Presentation afternoon in the Boardroom Warrenpoint Town Hall in November. We were pleased to recognise a body of people who gave us such vital support with our projects this year. Thank you, Ann and all our benefactors and Corporate Members for your ongoing help and support.





Chairpersons Foreword



Last year, I spoke of our perceived “Flag Ship” project for 2024, celebrating the Bicentenary of Haulbowline Lighthouse, which stands at the mouth of Carlingford Lough. Once again, we are indebted to Thomas Braham

(Braham Group) for illuminating the tower in this seminal year.

Thomas devised a solar-powered system to power the lights. I am delighted to report that those aspirations steadily turned into reality as the year progressed and we delivered a busy schedule of events reflecting the historical narrative of the Lough. NMA continue to engage as stakeholders in important infrastructure projects such as, The Albert Basin Park Project. The Newry Southern Relief Road. The new section of Greenway from Victoria Lock to the Border. Working closely with the Capital Projects Officer, Mr Seamus Crossey we have already installed a striking image of Haulbowline Lighthouse in its Bi- Centennial year. The lighthouse which was built at the behest of the Merchants of the Port of Newry illustrates the importance of our Port at that time. We have plans to site further artefacts on this innovative section of the walkway as the project is rolled out. The lighthouse project also afforded the opportunity to align ourselves with the Newry Felons and the Newry Dominican Community. We commissioned The Newry Felons to build a 12ft lighthouse and obtained permission from the Dominican community to site it in the garden in Dominic Street. This was a tribute to the Dockers from the Port of Newry who maintained the garden for decades for the Clergy voluntarily. The artefact has been very well received and there is increased footfall in the garden now.

I hope you will enjoy the read and get an insight into our all-inclusive schedule of events across 2024.

OBITUARY.



Whilst 2024 was a successful year for our Association it was tinged with sadness as we bade farewell to esteemed members and dear friends.

TOM MCCABE. CONDUCTOR, CAMLOUGH BRASS AND REED BAND.

News of Toms passing evoked a wave of sorrow across his native Bessbrook and the wider community on 30th March. We at NMA were particularly saddened as Tom and the Band had played a key role in so many of our high-profile events over the years. Tom was a man with an eye for detail and everything had to be done to a strict timetable. This probably came from his work experience. A long spell in Bessbrook Mill followed by a tenure with the Northern Ireland Electricity Board gave

him an inbred discipline that he exhibited daily. He would always do his level best to facilitate a request for the Band to attend a function and was fiercely proud of his association with the Band for almost 80 years. Music and football, both codes, were Tom's passions.

In his younger days, he was acknowledged as a skilful talent with pace and lethal accuracy on the football field. He was also an avid Armagh fan and was quietly proud of his nephew Greg making the senior team.

How he would have savoured the win over Galway in July to bring "Sam" back to Armagh. Our last engagement with Tom and the band was at Helens Terrace Newry on Saturday 29th July 2023. The Band played afterwards in Whitegates CA and we made a presentation to Tom to acknowledge his 90th birthday. As always, he was in fine fettle and his normal sprightly self. Sadly, within weeks he went into a decline which gathered momentum over the coming months.



OBITUARY.



KC Hire, Corporate Member.

KEVIN CLARKE.

In his later years, Kevin endured indifferent health but news of his passing was received with shock, widespread grief and genuine sorrow. Following his attendance at Cloughogue School Kevin went to ST Josephs High School in Newry. Classmates recall Kevin's passion for tractors constantly sketching and talking about them.

It was a happy day for Kevin when he finally left school to start work on the family farm, his dream came through. Like his father and Uncles before him, Kevin was destined for the licenced trade and took over his Uncle Anthony's Bar on Warrenpoint Road upon his uncle's retirement. Kevin's engaging personality ensured it was a thriving enterprise. Never one to rest on his laurels, the young

entrepreneur decided to open an equipment hire business in the yard which was adjacent to the bar. This was the birth of KC Hire and was a huge leap of faith back in 1993 as this was a fledgling enterprise. But Kevin persevered and expanded his business and in 1996 moved to more commodious premises in Greenbank. KC Hire has been a valued Corporate member of NMA for a decade now and a loyal benefactor. Just 4 years later he relocated to his home place on Flagstaff Road and the business flourished. The pub was now surplus to requirements and was disposed of. With his young family now involved in the daily grind of the business Kevin could indulge his passion for farming and his livestock. Sadly, fate intervened and his health deteriorated resulting in him passing away on 7th June 2024 in just his 62nd year. Kevin will be dearly missed by all of us who knew him, especially his wife and family to whom we extend our deepest sympathies.



OBITUARY.

OWEN MC DONNELL ESTEEMED MEMBER.

Just days after the passing of Kevin Clarke all at NMA were rocked with the news that Owenie Mc Donnell had died after a short illness, bravely fought. Owenie was born during "The Depression" in 1930 and existence in the Border area of South Armagh would have been challenging. Having finished in Killeen school, Owenie decided, like so many of his contemporaries, that he would follow the call of the sea. His career brought him around the world and when he finally decided to call it a day he got a job in the boiler house in Daisy Hill Hospital. There he was joined by another 2 retired seafarers, Paddy Mc Cann and Peter Jackson who are also sadly deceased. The 3 men were lifelong friends and even ashore ended up working together. Owenie was never happier than when he was out on his tractor tending his cattle and he took great pleasure from our NMA outings. We extend our deepest sympathies to Owens family on their sad loss. RIP Owenie.





OBITUARY.



Joe Mc Arevey. ESTEEMED MEMBER, School Teacher Formerly of Newry and Greater Manchester.

Joe passed away very suddenly on Wednesday 14th August in St Georges Community Centre in Bolton while doing something he loved, playing the piano for pensioners. He went along every week and played music in a voluntary capacity.

After leaving the Abbey CBS in 1966 he went to Manchester where he trained as a teacher of English Language/Literature and Music.

He taught in Greater Manchester for the next 35 years and retired to Bolton about 20 years ago.

He has been domiciled there for 58 years whilst just returning for holidays.

Ironically, he had booked to come for a holiday on Sunday 18th August but passed away 4 days previously. He was an original and very keen member of NMA and an avid fan of Armagh GAA. His diverse interests and pastimes was reflected in the various groups represented at his funeral. There were people from community centres, a book club, a choir and the owner of a licenced restaurant where he had played the piano for over 20 years.

We wish to thank Councillor Martin Donaghy and his brother Michael, natives of Bessbrook, who together with a team from Bolton Borough Council streamlined a somewhat difficult process. sincere thanks to each and every one of you. RIP Joe.

NMA WELCOMES, BLUE PRINT PIZZA COMPANY.



On the 17th February 1998 the Canal Court Hotel opened its doors for the first time, and now in 2023 celebrated its 25th anniversary.

Back in October 1996, a new family-owned and orientated business opened its doors in Cornmarket, Newry. Housed in the historic Ballybot House complex the business has gone from strength to strength over the intervening years. Blue Print Pizza has earned a reputation

for fine cuisine far beyond the local area. The proprietors, Bernard and Daire Connolly have created a matching ambience and the dining experience is one of excellence. NMA is delighted to have Blue Print Pizza as a welcome addition to our Corporate portfolio and we wish you continued success.



NMA Congratulates Felix O Hare & Co.

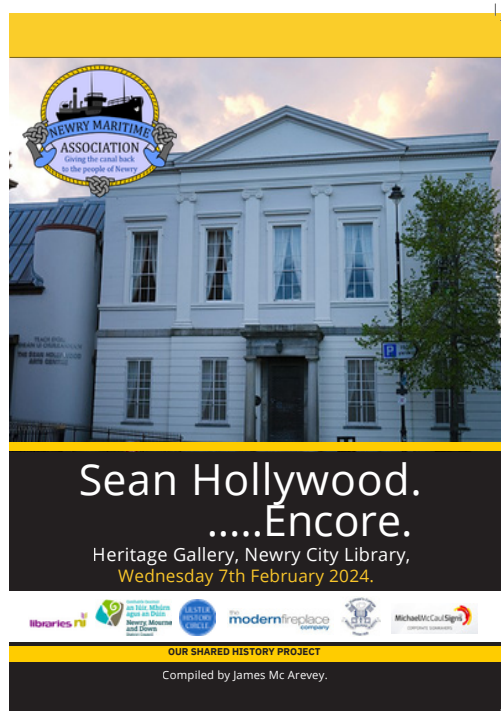


The firm, a valued Corporate Member, is headquartered on Chancellors Road, Newry and has garnered a very high profile across the construction industry.

This was reflected in October this year when the firm scooped the “Overall Award” for the Riddell Hall Management School, Queens University Belfast at the 2024 CEF Excellence Awards.

“Riddel Hall Management School is a worthy winner of this year’s ‘Overall Award’ and, as the judges themselves commented, the teamwork between the contractor, design team and client all striving to deliver a great project was evident in the execution of the fine details and finishes such as the insitu concrete finishes internally and precast concrete exterior finishes. “In addition, particularly impressive was the quality of the internal joinery which demonstrated the significant advantage of having an in-house joinery team which could work collaboratively with the design team to develop details that added to the practicality and joy of the completed project. “In conclusion the completed building blends perfectly into the curtilage of the original listed Riddle Hall with high quality landscaping and subtle use of materials to provide world class facilities for the staff and students at Queens University. “Congratulations to Felix O’Hare for delivering a magnificent building that they, and the entire Northern Ireland construction industry, can be proud of as a symbol of what we can achieve”.

Sean Hollywood Encore. Newry City Library. 12th February 2024.



The unveiling of a prestigious Blue Plaque in honour of Sean Hollywood at St. Colman's College on Tuesday 12th December 2023 was a red letter day.

Over 350 people from all walks of life attended the event, acknowledged by the Ulster History Circle as one of their best-ever received projects. We at NMA were very proud to have nominated Sean for such special and well-deserved recognition.

Working with the Ulster History Circle, this is the 5th Blue Plaque that NMA has brought to Newry. Following on from the unmitigated success of the day we decided to host a more informal follow-up for family, close friends, key contributors and sponsors.

Working in association with Libraries NI we hosted "Sean Hollywood Encore" in the Newry branch on 12th February. Once again, a very successful event in a relaxed and ambient setting and we were especially pleased to welcome Maud Hamill who led the project on behalf of the Ulster History Circle.

Sincere thanks to Sean's lifelong friend Mickey Keenan, and Modern Fireplace Company who generously sponsored the Blue Plaque event.



Photos courtesy of Maud Hamill.

Newry Maritime Association
Newry, Co. Down

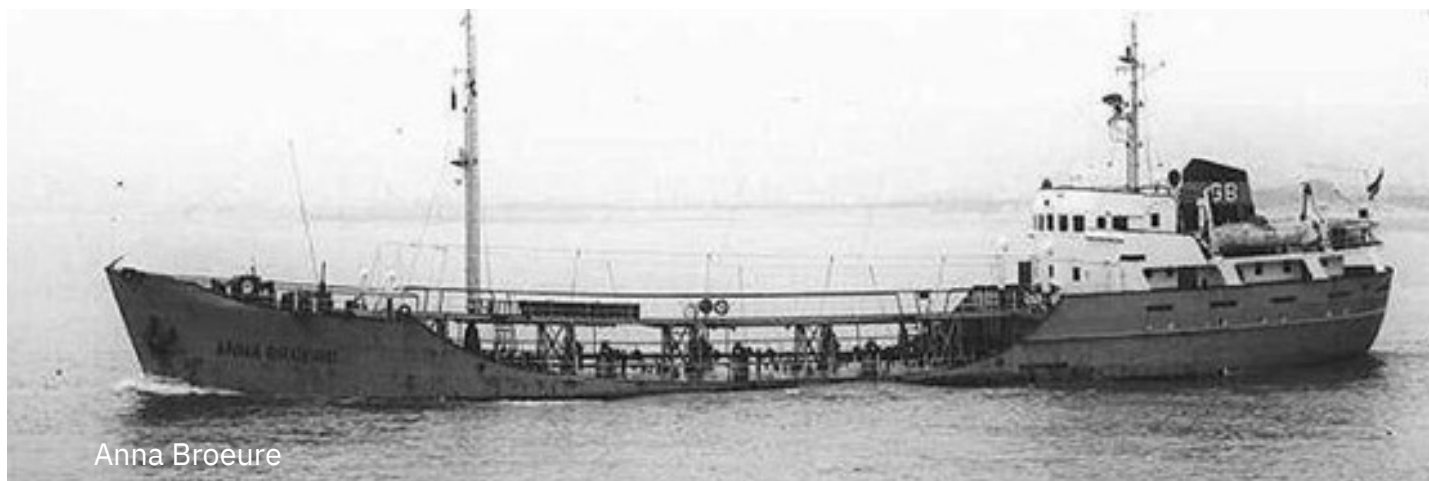
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T: 078 5652 0029



Sean Hollywood Encore. Newry City Library. 12th February 2024.



50th Anniversary of the closure of the Port of Newry.



Anna Broeure

2024 is a seminal year in the annals of the history of the Port of Newry as it marks the 50th anniversary of the closure of the commercial port and the inaugural year of the redeveloped port of Warrenpoint.

A former CEO of Warrenpoint Port Mr Peter Conway, used the strapline, "Warrenpoint is the port for the City of Newry" when promoting Warrenpoint to potential customers at home and abroad.

On Tuesday 26th March 1974 a little Dutch tanker arrived at Victoria Lock with a cargo of 600 tons of Acetone destined for the Lobitos oil distribution depot at Lower Fathom just a mile North of the Lock. "Anna Broere" built-in 1961 at the Kremer Wefrt yard in Elmshorn, Germany was the last commercial vessel to enter the Newry Ship Canal.

Lobitos based in Larne, an advertising breakdown of the name (Less Oil, Better Ignition, Tons Of Speed), opened their Fathom depot on 15th May 1957 on the West bank of the Canal and adjacent to the Omeath Road. They had 4 tanker lorries based there to service their customer base.

Interestingly, the first cargo for Lobitos was delivered by the "Pass Of Drumochter" which was one of the ships that went to the aid of the Ro Ro ferry, "Princess Victoria" which sank off the Co Down coast on Saturday 31st January 1953. The ferry got into serious difficulties when her car deck flooded during a severe storm. There were 136 fatalities with just 44 survivors. All the women and children on board perished.

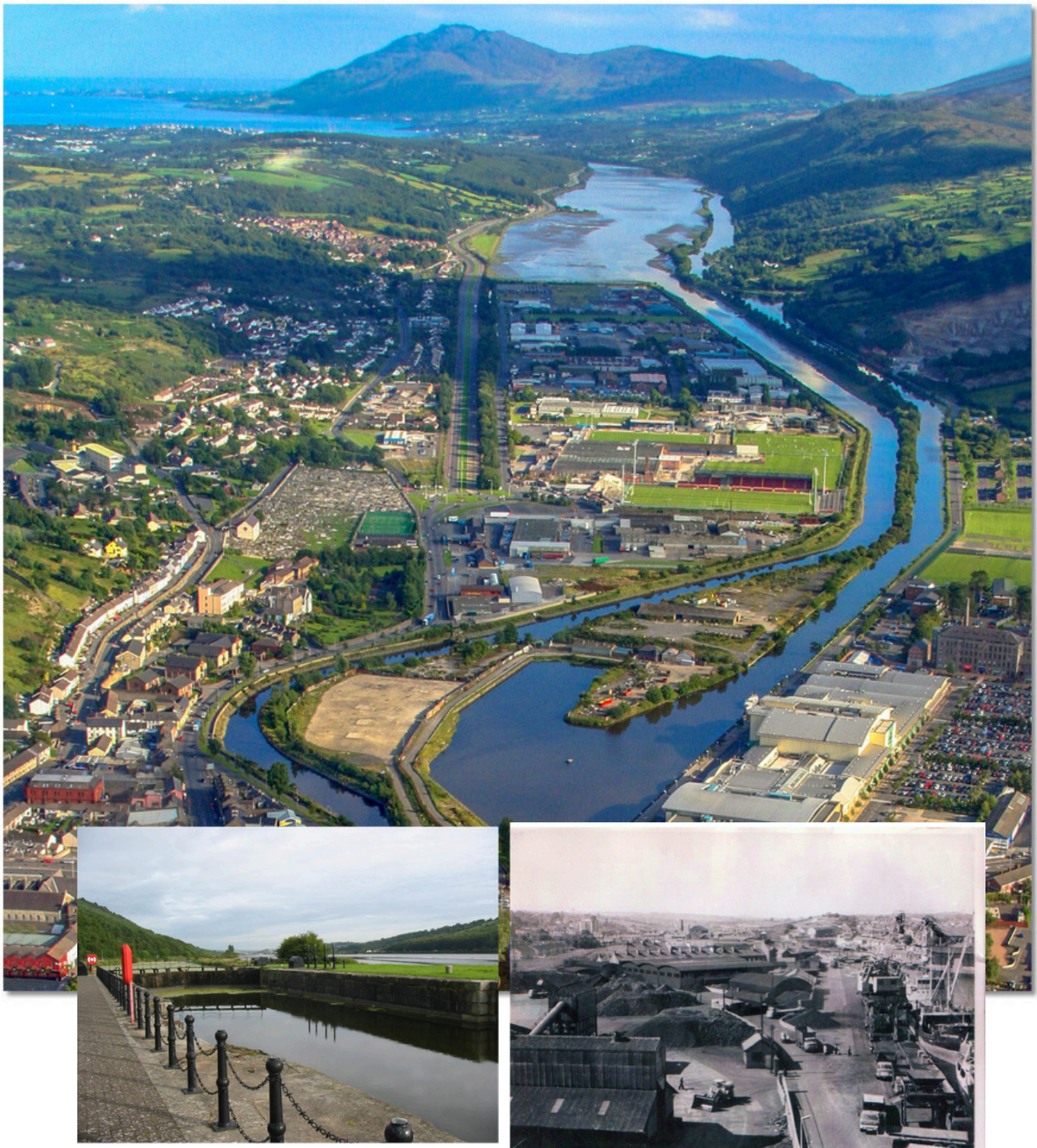
The cargo of Acetone was finally destined for Wades of Portadown, a firm that manufactured ceramics and earthenware. Headquartered in Stoke on Trent, the Portadown factory opened in 1947 and closed in 2002. Today, Wade products are highly sought-after collectables. The following day the Pilot, Willie John Cunningham, arrived to take the ship back to sea. Instead of continuing to the Albert Basin, he skilfully turned the vessel at Kellys Bend and returned to Victoria Lock. So the last vessel to enter the Canal didn't visit the Port !!!

When "Anna Broere" left Victoria Lock under

the command of Willie John Cunningham on Wednesday 27th March 1974 the curtain came down on 232 years of Canal history.



50th Anniversary of the closure of the Port of Newry.





The solemnity of the occasion was reflected in the tribute to Dr. O Connor led by Colin Whiteside and the Royal British Legion. The Last Post and Reveille was sounded by Mr John Henry, Tullyvallen Silver Band whilst Piper Geoffrey Moffett, Bessbrook Crimson Arrow, played a lament. We extend our thanks to Maud Hamill, Chris Cassidy and Tommy Murray for their marked input to the project.

newrymaritimeassociation@gmail.com
T: 078 5652 0029



Civic Heritage Tribute. Dr EF O Connor, Bellevue Bessbrook.



Newry Maritime Association
Newry, Co .Down

newrymaritimeassociation@gmail.com
T: 078 5652 0029

St. Patricks Day Parade, Newry 2024.



Despite the holiday falling on a Sunday the Council decided to hold the parade on the day. Once again we were very pleased to coordinate transport arrangements for our good friends in Camlough Brass and Reed Band.

Weather-wise, it was a miserable day marked by drizzling rain which led to a depleted attendance but the parade was well subscribed. Sincere thanks to Surefreight for providing us with a lorry. Neil Weir was our driver again this year and as ever his Scania truck was in pristine condition. A great team effort and we look forward to doing the same again next year.





NMA Congratulates Peter Fitzpatrick.



This year has proven to be very successful for our Hilltown headquartered Corporate member Peter Fitzpatrick Ltd.

The firm delivered 24,000 tons of rail ballast stones from its quarries in the Mourne to the new Belfast Grand Central Station transport hub. The £340 million scheme will centralise road and rail services in Belfast. Work commenced on the construction of the Narrow Water Bridge after Easter and the Irish Government is solely funding the £110 million scheme through its Shared Island Fund. Peter Fitzpatrick Ltd will supply all the aggregates required to deliver this historic and groundbreaking project. We wish Peter Fitzpatrick continued success in the year ahead.



Launch of Haulbowline Lighthouse Bi-Centennial Project. Wednesday 29th May 2024.



Built by George Halpin (SNR), "The Father of Irish Lighthouses," Haulbowline first exhibited a light on September 1, 1824. The Lighthouse marks the dangerous rocks of the same name at the entrance to Carlingford Lough. Marking the Bicentenary of the lighthouse's service was planned as our marquee project for 2024, with a series of events drawn from the Lough's narrative. We aspired to host events that were all-inclusive and embraced as many groups and individuals as possible. We also wished to embody a cross-border and cross-community ethos with which everyone could identify.

Welcome aboard
"Ps Waverley"
for
"THE LIGHT OF
THE LOUGH CRUISE"
1824 – 2024





Launching NMA Haulbowline
Lighthouse Bi-Centennial Project.
Wednesday 29th May 2024.

Illuminating the tower was a key element of the project, no mean feat, and something we first achieved in 2016 as part of our "Connemara" and "Retriever" Centenary project. We began the preparatory work in October 2023 and obtained permission from the Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL) for the 7th illumination of Haulbowline.



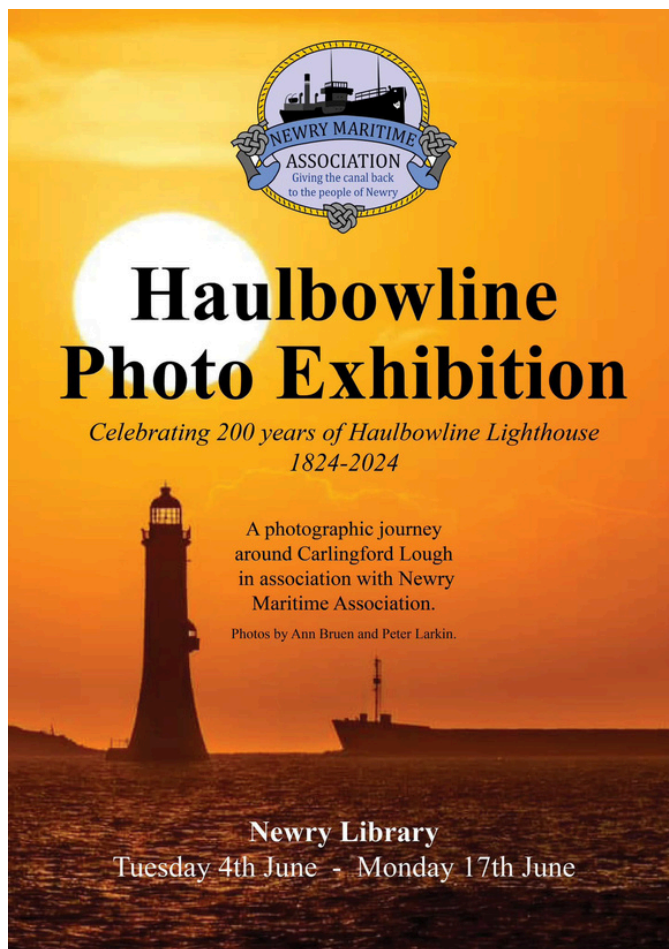
Launch of Haulbowline Lighthouse Bi-Centennial Project. Wednesday 29th May 2024.

Meetings with Warrenpoint Port and inviting them on board proved fruitful. The Port informed us of the pending visit of "Ps Waverley" in May 2024 and very generously offered the opportunity to launch our project onboard on the cruise to Dundrum on 29th May. They also provided complimentary tickets which allowed us to invite key stakeholders, including a party from a peer group, The Ulster History Circle.

"Waverley" visited Warrenpoint Port on 28th and 29th May and carried over 1100 passengers. The Bi-Centennial project was launched onboard with "The Light of the Lough Cruise" on Wednesday 29th May and we made a presentation to the Captain. This highly successful event was the precursor to a schedule reflecting our rich maritime heritage. Since 1975 Waverley has carried over 6 million passengers and earned herself a loyal following in several areas around the UK including the South Coast and Thames. More recently in 2019 a public appeal raised £2.3m to replace the steam boilers and save the vessel from withdrawal. A big thank you to our Corporate Member, Warrenpoint Port, for this marvellous community initiative and fingers crossed we will see "PS Waverley" in Warrenpoint again.



Photographic Exhibitions by Ann Bruen.



A key element of our Haulbowline project was a series of very successful photographic exhibitions focussing on the lighthouse and Carlingford Lough.

We engaged with Ann Bruen, a very talented photographer from Omeath and over the summer she showcased her portfolio around the Lough. Having grown up in the seaside village, Ann has a strong affinity with the waterway and its environs. Liaising with Chris Cassidy and working in association with Libraries NI, Ann mounted exhibitions in the Newry, Warrenpoint and Kilkeel branches which were very well received. The focus then centred on Co. Louth with further well-subscribed exhibitions in Omeath and Carlingford.

One of her photographs of Haulbowline was later used as the template for our digital image of the lighthouse which we installed on the Greenway in September. We wish to thank Ann and acknowledge her vibrant and enthusiastic contribution to our Haulbowline Lighthouse Bi-Centenary project.



Photographic Exhibitions by Ann Bruen.



70th Anniversary of the O Hare Family Tragedy. Saturday 22nd June 2024.



The worst domestic tragedy on Carlingford Lough occurred on Tuesday 22nd June 1954. The well-known local bookmaker Hugh O Hare, his wife, son, sister in law and 3 friends drowned when his motor cruiser got into difficulties off Carlingford. One man was rescued. NMA marked the 65th anniversary of the tragedy with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque in Warrenpoint in 2019.

We were very pleased to accommodate a request from the O Hare family to mark the 70th anniversary. A separate event was also being organised in Carlingford, to which we were invited, and we worked closely with the hosts there. A member of An Garda Síochána played a key role in the rescue mission on that fateful day and the force was involved in the Carlingford event. We also extended an open invitation to everyone involved to attend our event later that day in Warrenpoint, including uniformed Gardai !!! Our request resulted in deliberations between officials in Dublin and Belfast and was approved. Saturday 22nd June was a historic day when 3 uniformed Gardai crossed the border to attend our event in Warrenpoint. Our engagement with, PSNI, RNLI, HM Coastguard, Irish Coastguard and Warrenpoint Port ensured a commemorative event delivered with integrity, respect and community support.





O Hare Family 70th Anniversary. Carlingford.



A service of remembrance was organised in Carlingford with an emphasis on "Safety on the Water". The event was led by Garda Sergeant John Brady,, Sheila Boyle and Carlingford Heritage Trust and Kevin Quinn whose Father was a Garda. In June 1954, Garda Rice figured prominently in the rescue of the sole survivor - Mr. Chas McDonald of Newry - of a motor boat tragedy in Carlingford Lough. Seven persons including three women and a boy, lost their lives when they abandoned the boat, which became filled with water and the engine had stopped. The bodies of the two women and the boy were never recovered. With two other men, Garda Rice put out in a small rescue boat from Carlingford to the scene of the accident. They had difficulty in getting their boat afloat as the tide was out. On the return journey an oar broke.

Guard Frank Rice

Guard Frank Rice was reared in Augher, Co. Tyrone and his family origins were in Meigh, Co. Armagh. He became a member of An Garda Siochana in 1926. He served in several places around the country and was transferred to Carlingford in 1946. He retired in November 1957 after 31 years service. Members of the emergency services were in attendance at the harbour and a piper from Carlingford Pipe Band played a lament. Hospitality followed in Holy Trinity Heritage Centre hosted by Carlingford Heritage Trust.

O Hare Family 70th Anniversary. Carlingford.



Following the poignant commemorative event in Carlingford we relocated to Warrenpoint to host the NMA tribute.

Our event in The Square was well-attended and again we were joined by representatives of the emergency services. This proved a historic day as we were joined by 3 uniformed members of An Garda Síochána whose presence caused quite a stir as some people thought there had been major political change!!!.

The Gardai were joined by colleagues from the PSNI and again the RNLI, HM Coastguard and Irish Coastguard were in attendance. Just as in 1919, Canon John Kearney conducted a prayer service and Pipe Major David Hanna played a Lament.

Post-event hospitality was very generously hosted by Terry O Hare and his sisters, Siobhan and Orla. They were sadly orphaned after the tragedy.



O Hare Family 70th Anniversary. Carlingford.



The Female Orphans Of Newry Workhouse. Hugh McShane History.



The unveiling of a commemorative plaque at Daisy Hill Hospital will serve as a lasting memory to the 35 female orphan girls who emigrated from Newry Workhouse to Australia between 1848 and 1850. The journey was arduous, a three month journey covering 14,000 miles by sailing ship.

Hugh McShane who was responsible for the event spoke about The Earl Gray Scheme, which facilitated the emigration of over 4,000 Irish female orphans, with 35 of the girls coming from Newry Workhouse. The ceremony aimed to remember these girls, who became nation builders in Australia, and their descendants now number over a million people. Daisy Hill Hospital is built on the site of the original Newry workhouse, which was opened in December 1841.



McShane explains "These girls left Newry workhouse between 1848 and 1850, just that two year period. It was very short period this scheme actually operated, for a new life in Australia, and at that time it was 14,000 miles away and a three month journey by sailing ship. So it was a very long journey coming from Newry which was the only place that they knew, the only place they had any life experience in, to this distant land that they basically knew nothing about." NMA where very pleased to assist Hugh with his very worthy project.



Congratulations to Pipe Major, David Hanna MBE.

Congratulations to Pipe Major David Hanna, Altnaveigh Memorial Pipe Band on his fantastic achievement as Pipe Major with the Band for 50 years!!!

David readily participates in our events when required, and his business, Hanna—Hillen Estates, is a valued Corporate Member of NMA.





Fisher Park.

Looking Back 2013

The Renaissance.

Saturday 30th June 2013 was a momentous day in the annals of NMA. After many months of lobbying our Council, we finally saw the little park, gifted to the people of Newry by the Fisher family, restored as a green oasis in the city centre.

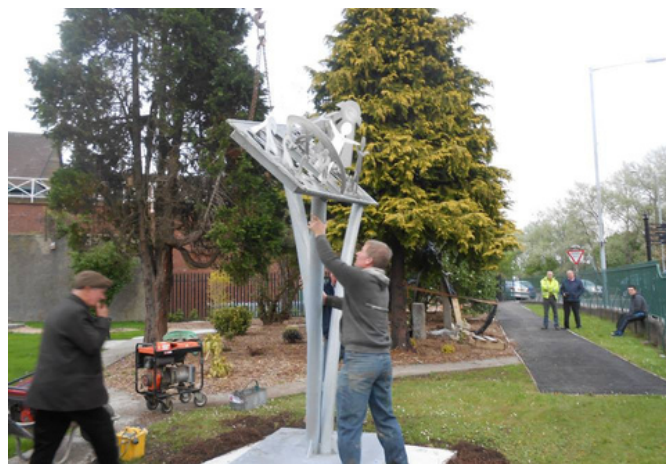
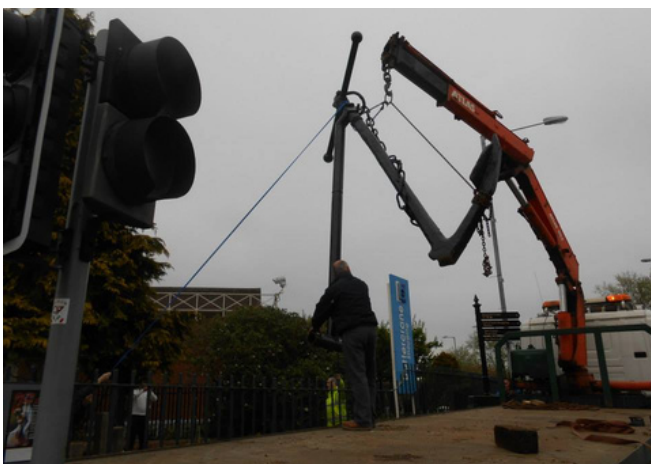
All the hard work and effort had paid off and we could enjoy the tangible results of our project. Mickey Mallon had refurbished the ship's anchor which was donated by Warrenpoint Port and the Council Grounds Maintenance team, led by Robbie Niblock had the shrubs and greenery in pristine condition. The perimeter railings had been rejuvenated with a coat of long overdue paint and the Name "FISHER PARK" had been gold leafed also.

The Mayor, Cllr. Michael Ruane was on hand to unveil our commemorative plaque and Pipe Major, David Hanna MBE, played a selection of tunes on the pipes.



Fisher Park.

Looking Back 2013





Fisher Park.

Showcasing our Legacy.

Following on from the very popular response engendered by our revitalisation of the Park we decided to install 4 large murals to depict 200 years of our Port history.

The unveiling took place on Saturday 18th December 2015, a really cold winters day, and the Mayor, Cllr. Naomi Bailie did the honours. Our Chairperson, Michael O Hare, was very pleased to introduce Mr John DF Fisher and his son James. Mr Fisher was a long-standing member of NMA and the family has always been generous benefactors.

Just 6 months later, in June 2016, we fully illuminated the murals and this gave them an added dimension. Sadly, a few years later the lights were completely destroyed in a wanton act of mindless criminality. NMA replaced the lights at our own cost. The Council said that as we had installed them then they were our responsibility. To date, they haven't been interfered with.



Fisher Park.

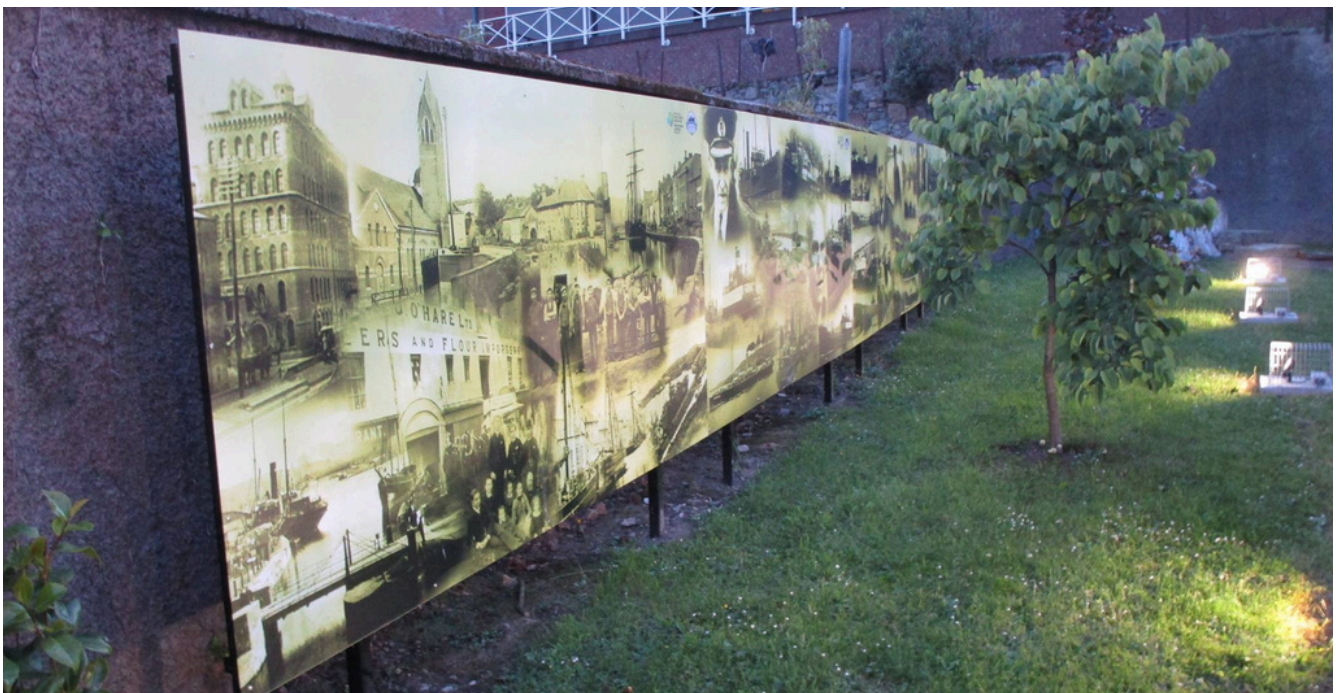
Showcasing our Legacy.





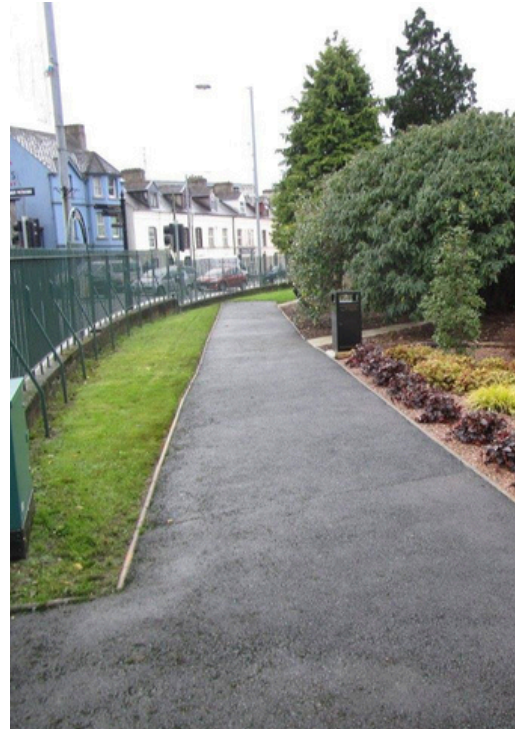
Fisher Park.

Showcasing our Legacy.



Fisher Park.

Showcasing our Legacy.



7th Illumination of Haulbowline Lighthouse.



On 1st August we embarked from Greencastle on board "William John", skippered by Captain Sean Cunningham, retired Pilot and Lighthouse Attendant.

Thomas Braham would install a solar-powered system to illuminate the 34-metre-high Haulbowline Lighthouse off Cranfield. This presented its challenges to what is already a stern undertaking.

This is the 7th occasion that we have illuminated the tower in association with Irish Lights and sponsored by The Braham Group, Warrenpoint.



My visit to Haulbowline Lighthouse.

By Lee Maginiss.



Lee Maginnis is a freelance journalist and agricultural contractor. He has a strong affinity with The Lough, the lighthouse, and the Cranfield area, having spent countless holidays there in his formative years. Lee also enjoys sport and recreation on the Lough. We were accompanied by Omeath photographer, Ann Bruen who has built a large portfolio of photographs of life around the Lough and the Lighthouse. Both realised long-held ambitions when they entered the historic facility for the first time on Thursday 1st August. Here Lee describes his visit,

With sincere thanks to the Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL), Newry Maritime Association (James McArevey), Sean Cunningham, Michael Cunningham, and Thomas Braham.

Haulbowline Lighthouse has now been keeping mariners safe for two centuries. The legendary tapered tower, standing guard at the mouth of Carlingford Lough, was designed by George Haplin, an engineering genius who was also responsible for the nearby and much more diminutive Greenore Lighthouse.

But it is Haulbowline, the thirty-four metres of sheer magnificence towering out of the Irish Sea, built of granite blocks nearly seamlessly joined together, that holds such a special place in the local community and further afield.

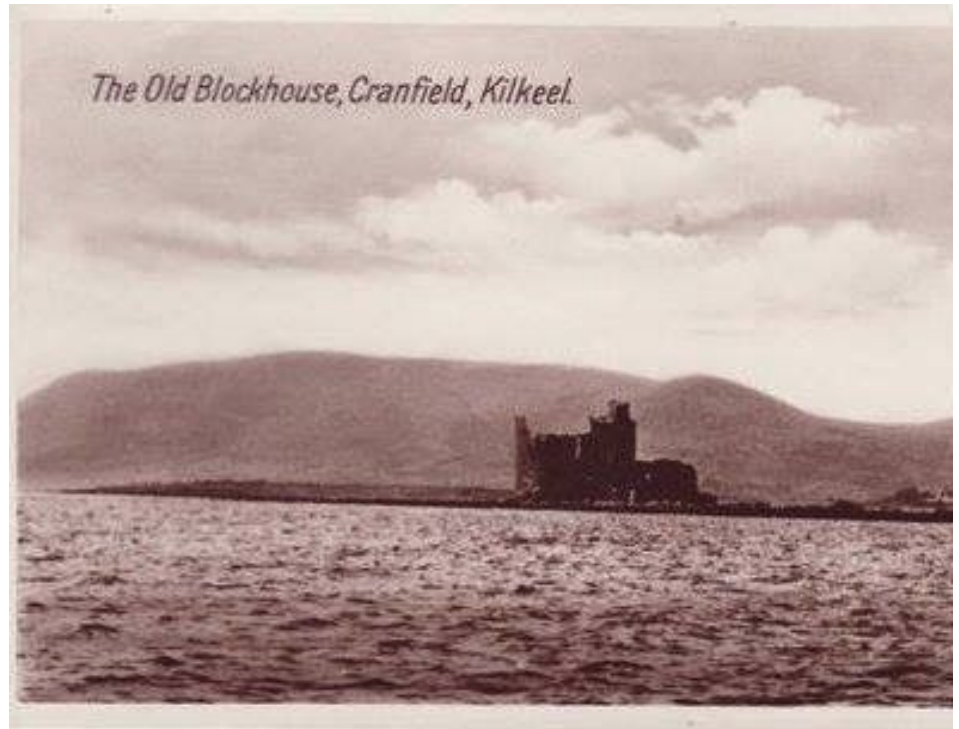
Haulbowline, the name likely derived from the Norse for "eel area/den," was built to replace the existing lighthouse at Cranfield Point, which has since collapsed into the sea. The nearby old keepers' cottage is still currently intact but in poor repair. It was used as a shore station for Haulbowline until 1922, when new buildings were opened at Greencastle.

The new lighthouse was a feat of imagination and engineering, especially bearing in mind how long ago the construction took place. It was built on a wave-swept rock, only visible at low tide. Dangerous currents of up to nine knots flow around the base.

Nearby Blockhouse Island was used during the building work, and some unused granite blocks are still to be found there. Back then, the Blockhouse itself was impressive. It used to be known as Carlingford Fort. Now, it's reduced to ruins which have nearly disappeared.

My visit to Haulbowline Lighthouse.

By Lee Maginiss.



Originally, Haulbowline was painted white, but it reverted back to its natural stone colour in 1946. It housed three keepers, and back then there was a lot to do. There was a metal ball that was hoisted and lowered to indicate the tide, a half-tide lantern, and a red turning light.

In case of fog, there was initially a bell, then explosive fog signals, before eventually a diaphone fog signal. The main lamp would have required tending. The amount of maintenance and cleaning must have been phenomenal.

One keeper was reported as often making the swim from Haulbowline to Charlie's Rock at Cranfield Beach—and obviously back out again. Quite a feat of athleticism, not even allowing for the hazards of stinging jellyfish.

The lighthouse became the first major Irish offshore light to become fully automated on the 17th of March 1965. Sadly, the rest were to follow suit.

There is no longer any fog signal, though it is remembered fondly by many. The generators have been taken away. There is still a light shown from 32m up, but it is now a solar/battery-powered LED. The sweeping beam and rotating lens are long gone, and the range is down to 10 nautical miles.

In through the stout green doors, the thickness of the walls becomes evident—solid and built to last. The old life ring still hangs behind the central pole at the base of the cast iron spiral staircase. It is easy to imagine the muffled clanging of the keepers' footsteps as they ascended and descended.



My visit to Haulbowline Lighthouse.

By Lee Maginiss.



The old smells of the tower still hang in the air. Salt-encrusted window panes show the result of the battering they have taken over the years. Cormorants have made use of the external sills to construct nests for hatching and raising their young.

It can be so easy to lose count of the floors when climbing towards the lantern room. Thankfully, someone has kindly provided a useful diagram and left it attached to a wall.

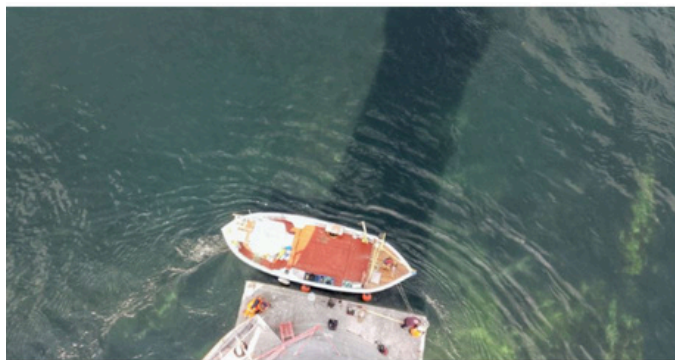
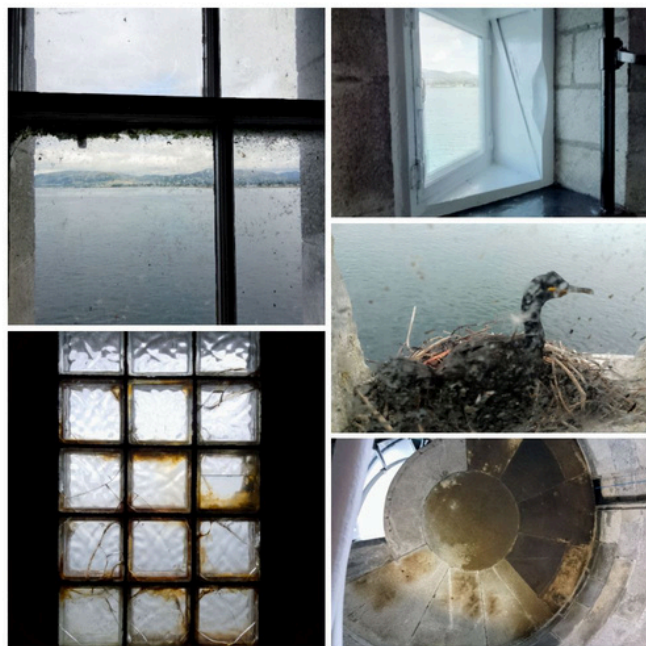
The old oil tanks are still in place, and the reek of paraffin lingers. In the basic mess room, there is a fireplace complete with the musty scent of soot. There really is not a lot of room on each floor—hard even to imagine where the beds or bunks were. There is no sign of any bathroom facilities. Getting nearer the top, the rise in temperature is noticeable—the greenhouse effect of the glass lantern room. Suddenly emerging into bright light, the view is amazing. There is a little stack of batteries that during the day store up the charge from the four small solar panels outside, which then power the LED at night: three flashes every ten seconds, each flash half a second in duration. A small metal door leads out onto the balcony that surrounds the lantern room.

There is still a tiny high platform beside the pole where the keepers would have flown the CIL flag. They would also have used the platform to send signals to the shore. Clambering around that narrow balcony cleaning the glazing from bird droppings and other detritus would not have been a bad job on a settled day but would have required nerves of steel in challenging conditions. A metal ladder leads on up to the roof of the dome. On a clear day, the panoramic views are staggering, accompanied by a strong aroma of seabird guano.

The six-cylinder, Perkins diesel-powered retained boat for servicing Haulbowline is called the Willie John. William John Cunningham was a pilot on Carlingford Lough for over forty years. Back then, he operated in an open boat. The work was tough and dangerous. His son, Sean, worked with him and was a pilot and lighthouse attendant for forty-five years. Sean is still active today, happily aboard the Willie John along with his nephew Michael.

My visit to Haulbowline Lighthouse.

By Lee Maginiss.



When Haulbowline was manned, William John brought supplies out on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All his sons work on Carlingford Lough along with two of his nephews. Haulbowline may not be deemed to be as vital today as it once was, but it's still active and has a part to play. Thankfully, it is also a listed building.

With many boats depending on GPS systems now, what happens when these systems fail? Haulbowline is a main sea light and also a guide through the entrance channel from the open sea to Carlingford Lough. Two hundred years, and still standing.



19th Irish International Currach Championships.



We were pleased to be involved with our partner group, Carlingford Lough Currach Club (CLCC) in the promotion of their annual currach championships at Warrenpoint. The hard work and effort of all in CLCC is now paying a rich dividend and the event is one of the most prestigious in the Currach sporting calendar attracting teams, not only from across Ireland, but the UK and USA.

NMA sponsor a perpetual trophy for "Club person of the Year" which was awarded to Eileen Carvill this year.

We decided to donate a special trophy this year also to mark the Bi-Centenary of Haulbowline Lighthouse. This bespoke award for "Competitor of the Championships" was awarded to Martine Kraus from USA. NMA are proud participants in the CLCC Championship Weekend and we wish everyone in the club continued success in the years ahead.

NMA Visit to Carers First.



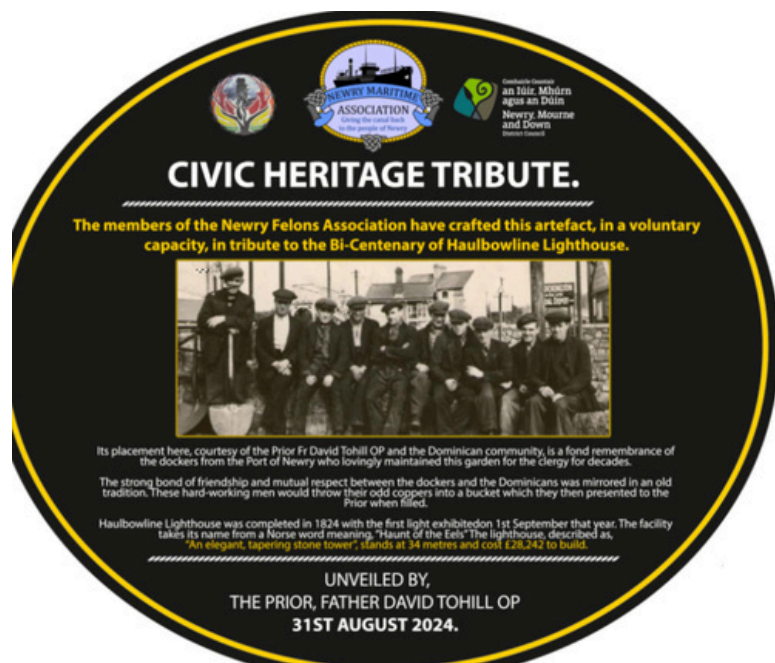
We are always pleased to answer the request from Roger Connolly to visit their premises in Dromalane Mill and deliver a Maritime talk to the group.

You can be assured of a lovely cuppa accompanied by a generous selection of sandwiches and pastries and this year was no different. Carers First operates as part of the Clanrye Group, Newry and delivers a support programme which runs across the Southern Trust and is open to all unpaid carers aged over 18.

Thanks Roger for the invite, always happy to help out. Photo on email from 22nd August.



NMA Tribute to the Newry Dockers. Saturday 31st August.

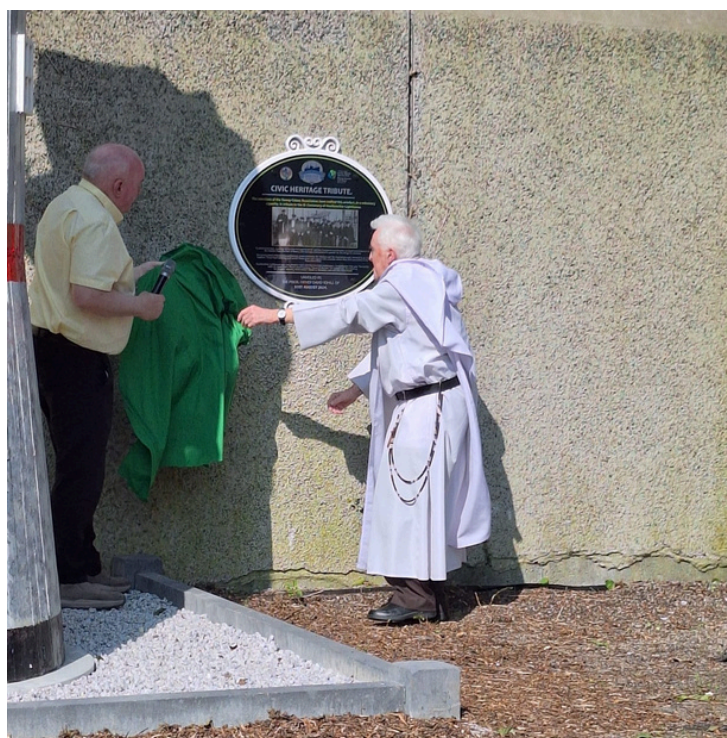


On what was undoubtedly one of the best days of the year, with the green oasis that is the Dominican garden swathed in warm golden sunshine, we paid a unique and thoroughly well deserved tribute to the dockers of the Port of Newry. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the closure of the commercial port of Newry with the departure of the last ship, a Dutch registered tanker, "MV Anna Broere" on 27th March 1974.

This year also marks the Bi-Centenary of Haulbowline Lighthouse which was built at the behest of the merchants of Newry and underscores the importance of the Port at that time. Planning for the event began late last year and would see an alliance between the private and voluntary sectors, along with our Dominican community, deliver a fitting tribute to men who contributed so much to the development of the modern Newry over generations. The Dockers had a strong affinity with the Dominican Community and tended the garden in Dominic Street on a voluntary basis for decades.

We decided to incorporate the 2 anniversaries (Port closure and Lighthouse 200 years) into our tribute to the Dockers. We commissioned the Newry Dockers to build a lighthouse and sought permission from the Prior and Dominican Community to site it in the garden, which they granted. Fr Tohill and Fr Mc Keown visited the Barcroft Community Garden during the construction of the artefact to familiarise themselves and monitor progress. Fr Noel Mc Keown later returned to impart a Blessing on the premises.

NMA Tribute to the Newry Dockers. Saturday 31st August.





NMA Tribute to the Newry Dockers. Saturday 31st August.



The Dominican garden itself was proving problematic as there was a lot of overgrowth in the bottom end at Buttercrane and the Prior was receiving reports of anti social behaviour. The newly appointed Bursar, Fr Ruaidhri Grieve, was charged with overseeing a major cleanup of the garden and within weeks he had contractors on site and the result was transformative. The garden has been revitalised and attracting increased footfall. Result for Fr Ruaidhri !!!

Our project now had the green light and we assembled a team who would ensure its successful delivery on the day. With such high powered input and support across the board, failure was never an option

This is our "A" Team,
Unveiling The Prior, Fr David Tohill OP.
Construction Newry Felons.
Groundwork Mickey Keenan and Modern Fireplace Company.
Painting of
Lighthouse Michael Mc Caul Signs.
Illumination Thomas Braham & The Braham Group.
Music Kathy Mc Caughey & The Choir Studio.
Catering Moira Mc Court & The Ladies in the Dominican Hall.

The presence of Kathy and the girls from The Choir Studio added to the serenity and dignity of the occasion which was well attended and well received. Afterwards we retired to the Dominican Hall, courtesy of The Prior, where hospitality was provided by Moira Mc Court and served by ladies from the church community.

A massive thank you is extended to everyone who assisted in the delivery of this very special remembrance tribute especially Fr David Tohill, The Prior.

Fr David concluded his 2nd term as Prior of St Catherines, 6 years, in the first week of September and has returned to the Dominican Priory in Dundalk where he was stationed before coming to Newry. We thank Fr David for his years of dedicated ministry in Newry and wish him well in his new role in Dundalk.

We extend a warm Newry welcome to his successor, Fr Patrick Desmond OP. a native of Cork, who has been appointed as Prior of St Catherines.

NMA Tribute to the Newry Dockers. Saturday 31st August.





Installation of Digital Image of Haulbowline Lighthouse at Victoria Lock. Saturday 7th September.



Just a week on from our highly successful and well received event in the Dominican garden we were siting another lighthouse, albeit a completely different structure.

This artefact is a 12ft tall double sided digital image of Haulbowline modelled on a photograph taken from the portfolio of Ann Bruen. We applied for permission from the Council to site this striking image, and a commemorative plaque, adjacent to the new section of Greenway currently under construction between Victoria Lock and the Border.

NMA have been involved with the Greenway project since its inception in 2012. Council officials Eamon Mc Manus and Catherine Murphy, both now retired, were responsible for the development of the Greenway in its aspirational and formative years.

With permission secured from Council we liaised with the current Project Manager, Mr Seamus Crossey, from the Economy, Regeneration and Tourism Department and he quickly identified a site within the Victoria Lock complex and in a prominent position adjacent to the new Greenway. Just as the week previous, the warm Autumn sun beamed down across Fathom as NMA Chairman, James Mc Arevey, unveiled the accompanying plaque.

Installation of Digital Image of Haulbowline Lighthouse at Victoria Lock. Saturday 7th September.



This site was chosen because Victoria Lock was the access and egress for the thriving Port of Newry and it was as a result of intense lobbying by the merchants from the town of Newry that Haulbowline was commissioned and then built by George Halpin (SNR). Like the Greenore Railway and the Customs post, our Port has been consigned to the annals of history and that is why it is important to keep the memories alive. We are indebted to the team at Michael Mc Caul Signs for their professionalism and expertise in the fabrication and installation of this most impressive artefact. Sincere thanks, yet again, to Mr Seamus Crossey and another highly successful assignation with NMA. We look forward to more of the same.



NMA Tribute to 7 local seamen Decorated in WW2. Saturday 9th November .

Photos Courtesy of Maud Hamil



On the eve of Remembrance Sunday we hosted a very dignified and poignant tribute to 7 of our local seafarers whose courage and heroism received Civic Recognition during and after WW2.

The venue was Yew Tree Park, the little triangle nestled at the confluence Of River Street and Kilmorey Street which already hosts 7 NMA maritime tributes and a Blue Plaque awarded to Raymond Kelly GC from the Ulster History Circle. We were honoured to receive relatives of these true hero's and in particular, Mr Jan Mc Court, who travelled from Leicester to represent his Uncle, Captain Leo Mc Court.

Those honoured and their respective employers were:

First Officer Terry O Hanlon DSC Richard Hughes & Co Liverpool.

Chief Engineer Barney Murphy DSC Richard Hughes & Co Liverpool.

First Officer Paddy Mc Parland MBE Fishers of Barrow.

Captain David Ivor MBE John Kelly & Co.

Fireman Paddy Mallon. BEM Joseph Fisher & Sons Newry.

Captain Leo Mc Court. DSC Richard Hughes & Co Liverpool.

Commodore Captain, Harry Hollywood MBE Joseph Fisher & Sons Newry.





Remembrance Sunday, Newry. 10th November 2024.

We were pleased, once again, to be part of the Remembrance Sunday event at the Cenotaph in Newry. NMA have been in attendance at this event since 2013. We lay 2 wreaths. One is a replica "Fisher Flag" wreath laid in remembrance of all those who sailed with the Fisher Fleet. Originally sponsored by Mr John Fisher, the wreath is now sponsored by his widow, Susan, since Mr Fishers passing. The wreath was laid by Murtagh Duffy.

Our 2nd wreath is laid in tribute to the men and women of the Merchant Navy who played such a key role in both global conflicts. The MN wreath is sponsored annually by our esteemed members and sisters, Helena Carr and Bridie Kane and was laid by Pat Malone. As usual the event was well attended, poignant and dignified and concluded with a lament on the Pipes from Pipe Major, David Hanna, Altnaveigh Memorial Pipe Band.



Remembrance Sunday, Whitehall, London. Sunday 10th November.



King Charles 111 officiated at the National Commemoration of Remembrance at The Cenotaph, Whitehall, London and again NMA was represented. Mr Adam Fisher, now living in Kent, laid the replica "Fisher Flag" wreath in tribute to all those who had sailed with the family firm. This year the wreath arguably gained its best ever exposure due to its prominent position on the plinth.

Adam reported that the turnout in the Merchant Navy Section was an increase on last year and he says the interest that the wreath generates makes him very proud of all those he represents. Adam sponsors the wreath annually and we thank him for his ongoing help and support.



Turning back the Years. Remembrance Sunday, Whitehall, London. Sunday 19th November 2013.



Ironically, just as this year, Remembrance Sunday fell on the 10th November back in 2013. This was the first time that NMA had been represented at the prestigious event in London. The idea had been mooted by our member, Helena Carr, who lives in Hampshire and is a member of the Merchant Navy Association (MNA). Helena had attended the parade on previous occasions with the MNA contingent and suggested that NMA should be represented. Her suggestion gained traction and was approved and it was agreed to lay a "Fisher Flag" wreath in memory of all who sailed with the fleet.

4th generation of the family firm, Mr John Fisher, agreed to sponsor the wreath and Helena dealt with the bureaucracy, obtaining permission, security clearance (etc). Finally, with all the boxes ticked and hurdles crossed, Helena Carr laid the first NMA tribute at the Cenotaph in London proudly remembering her late Father, Pat, and her Uncle Jimmy who perished when the "SS Privet" disappeared with all hands on 5th December 1940. Sincere thanks to Helena and her sister, Bridie, for their continuing help and support.

NMA Haulbowline Bi-Centenary Presentations. Wednesday 4th December 2024.



NMA hosted a most successful presentation event in Warrenpoint Town Hall as an acknowledgement to groups and individuals who had contributed to our programme of events to mark the Bi-Centenary of Haulbowline Lighthouse.

On a winters day, with heavy rain, in Warrenpoint there was a glow of ambience in the Boardroom of the Town Hall amongst our guests. Catering on the day was very generously sponsored by Mr Thomas Braham and the Braham Group who featured prominently in our events during the year.

We commissioned a series of photographs of the iconic lighthouse from Ann Bruen and her portfolio, "Photography by Ann Bruen". Ann, a native of the village of Omeath on the Southern shores of Carlingford Lough, has a strong affinity with all aspects of the waterway. The recipients of her work were most appreciative and lavish in their praise. Ann received an engraved piece of glassware as did Pipe Major David Hanna MBE. David was recently honoured by the members of Altnaveigh Memorial Pipe Band where he has been Pipe Major for the last 50 years and we too congratulate him on reaching this prestigious milestone.



NMA Haulbowline Bi-Centenary Presentations. Wednesday 4th December 2024.



Delivery of all aspects of this project was dependent on the input from all those involved and we thank each and everyone involved most sincerely.

Chris Cassidy, Libraries NI
Pipe Major David Hanna, MBE and Pat Malone.
Newry Felons Association.
Rev Fr Ruaidhri Grieve OP.
Ann Bruen and Kevin Henry.
Thomas Braham and James Mc Arevey.

NMA Haulbowline Bi-Centenary Presentations. Wednesday 4th December 2024.



Everyone at NMA was delighted to hear that the Commissioners of Irish Lights had selected a photograph of Haulbowline Lighthouse from "Photography by Ann Bruen" for use as a wall mural in their Dun Laoghaire HQ. This is a well deserved accolade for Ann and a reflection of the high standard of her work. Ann visited Irish Lights in early December where she handed over our presentation to Jane Mc Gahern, (Pictured), Communications Manager with Irish Lights.





NMA Congratulates the Tinnelly Group.



Christmas came early for everyone at Cloughogue headquartered Tinnelly Group when they scooped the "Demolition Company of the Year Award"

The annual event is hosted by Machinery Movers Magazine and gives valued recognition to all sectors involved in the construction industry. Tinnelly trucks and equipment are a familiar sight working on projects across the island and much further afield.

The family firm is recognized for its appreciation of their staff and this was reflected in their acceptance speech when the award was dedicated to everyone involved with the Tinnelly Group.

All at NMA congratulate Tinnelly Group on receiving this industry accolade and we are proud to have the company as an esteemed Corporate Member.

Senior Citizens Christmas Party. St. Marys Hall, Newry. Wednesday 18th December 2024.



The curtain came down on a very busy year of activity in 2024 with our participation in the annual party for our senior citizens in St. Marys Hall. For many years NMA have interacted with Kate, Gina, Kylie, Assumpta and the vibrant committee in the hall who have provided much needed social and recreational activities for the community across the age spectrum for generations.

Indeed, just 2 years ago Councillor Gavin Malone made a presentation to Kate Cahill and Gina Jennings to mark their individual 32 years of service to the community with their work in St Marys. Both ladies were also receiving an award from the Council at the Annual Chairpersons Award which was being held in Newcastle

This year we were very fortunate to receive an award of £500 from the WARRENPOINT PORT COMMUNITY FUND and we decided to contribute the money towards the event in St Marys Hall for our Seniors. With the support from WARRENPOINT PORT we were able to supply a full buffet and musical entertainment for over 50 patrons. Our contribution would not have been possible without the financial support which we received from WARRENPOINT PORT and we take this opportunity to thank all those involved with the Community Fund at the Port for their generosity. You certainly enabled Kate, Gina and all the crew at St Marys to lay on a brilliant afternoon of entertainment to a group of happy and most appreciative patrons. Their smiles really said it all.

We are very proud to have been able to support the hard-working committee at St Marys Hall with their excellent community initiative. Thank you to everyone at WARRENPOINT PORT for making this possible.



**Senior Citizens Christmas Party.
St. Marys Hall, Newry.
Wednesday 18th December 2024.**

**Senior Citizens Christmas Party.
St. Marys Hall, Newry.
Wednesday 18th December 2024.**





Our Worst Maritime Tragedy



Clanrye SS Company.



LNWR



SS Connemara



SS Retriever

The collision between the SS Connemara and the SS Retriever in Carlingford Lough remains the most devastating disaster to impact this area and its surrounding communities since the Great Famine.

On a stormy night in November 1916, a freak accident took the lives of 94 people, leaving only one survivor. Each loss was a heartbreaking tragedy for families, friends, and neighbors. For the port town of Newry, accustomed to the dangers of maritime life, the sheer scale of this catastrophe was unparalleled, plunging the tight-knit community into grief.

During this period, Newry Port was a vital economic hub, supporting over 200 seamen and providing employment to hundreds more through businesses connected to the waterway. This activity was essential for local households, many of which relied on the port to survive. The port not only sustained livelihoods but also played a key role in Newry's development into a bustling center of industry and commerce.

THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS WHO SUPPORTED US THROUGH 2024.



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Nomadic Caravans.
KC Hire.
Crillys Sweets.
Medical Hall.
Mallons Hardware.
Mulkerns Eurospar.
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Michael Mc Caul Signs.
Re-Gen.
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CLd N, Ro Ro
HMT Shipping.
ML White Solicitors.
Carlingford Lough Ferry.
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