



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 43

APRIL 2009

Iontaobhas Oidhreachta Mianadóireachta na hEireann

Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland

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MHTI PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2009

(**Bold print** indicates finalised programmes; further details will be sent to members of events in ordinary print; *italics* indicates non-MHTI activities)

MHTI AGM Saturday 23rd May, Monksland, Bunmahon, Co Waterford – see inside for details

4th International Symposium on Archaeological Mining History – 29th May – 1st June, Rohrbach, Odenwald, Germany (see inside)

8th International Mining History Congress – 12-15 June 2009, based on the Penventon Park Hotel, Redruth, Cornwall – details <http://www.huss.ex.ac.uk/history/imhc/index.php>

NAMHO 2009 Conference, Matlock – 19-22 June 2009

<http://www.pdmhs.com/MeetsList.asp>
<http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/>

MHTI Fieldtrip to Antrim - Early mining and quarrying in the NE of Ireland 17-19th July
See inside for details

*Heritage Week: THE MINES OF SOUTH-EAST CLARE
A visit in association with the Clare Archaeological Society on 22nd August 2009. Meet in Quin outside the church at 2.00 pm. Leader, Des Cowman.*

Possible MHTI trip to Parys Mountain and Ormes Head in September 2009 – contact Martin Critchley

EDITORIAL

Please send any items for inclusion in the next newsletter to:
Des Cowman, “Knockane”, Annestown, Co. Waterford. ☎ (051) 396157 📧 dcowman@iol.ie

Newsletter Editor wanted!! Contact Matthew Parkes for information 087-122 1967 or mparkes@museum.ie

Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland Ltd. Registered Office: 36 Dame Street, Dublin 2.
TEMPORARY ADDRESS DUE TO RENOVATIONS: c/o Natural History Museum, Merrion Street, Dublin 2. Registered in Ireland as Company 340387

WWW.MHTI.COM

AGM at Monksland, Copper Coast Saturday 23rd MAY 2009 12.00 noon

Monksland is the name of the parish associated with the disused Church of Ireland at Knockmahon on the Copper Coast. For those GPSing their way, "Bunmahon", Osborne Terrace will bring you to the gate. For those who disdain such devices will probably find it easier to Waterford-Tramore-Coast Road for about 15 kms. turning right just before the Mahon river which separates Bunmahon from Knockmahon.

Much work remains to be done on the old Monksland building, especially on the tower. Temporary small windows have been inserted into the blocked-up originals. However, it is full of atmosphere ---!

Field trips will include visits to the 18th century silver mine west of Bunmahon, to the 1825-'50 operation at Knockmahon and to the conserved engine houses from the 1850-'75 operation at Tankardstown.

ACCOMMODATION (all +51 phone; prices per person)

Collins, Agnes, "Seaview House", Bunmahon, c. €30 ph. 292219

Connors, Peg, Park House, Stradbally, €30, ph.293185.

Munday, George, "Radharc Ailinn", Ballyduane East, €38, ph. 292020

Ng, Bridget, "Copper Coast Beauty", Benvoy, Annewstown, €40, ph. 396814.

Wilkins, Kary, Carrick Castle, Ballylanean (letsberich@eircom.net), €35, 292932

2009 SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you have not yet paid your membership subscription invoice for 2009 please do so as soon as possible

For the immediate future please send any outstanding subs to

Brian Jones

C/o Eason and Son

41 Lower O'Connell St

Dublin 1

TREASURER NEEDED

Ewan Duffy resigned as a Director of MHTI and as Treasurer with effect from 2 February 2009. The Board would like to thank Ewan for his long service and support of MHTI over many years. We are now actively seeking a replacement Director who would be prepared to carry out the duties of Treasurer. If you feel you could fulfil this position or know of someone else who could, please let us know.

ISLE OF MAN TRIP

The Isle of Man field visit, with some members joining the Irish Geological Association Group, is now fully subscribed. For anyone attending, or visiting the Isle of Man independently, please note that there is new Manx legislation which prohibits access to underground mines, even for the Laxey Mines Group, who hosted the MHTI visit some years ago. It is essential that no one breaks this rule, as it would compromise the efforts of the mining heritage specialists in the Isle of Man to restore their previously negotiated access.

UNDERGROUND ACCESS

It is a timely reminder that in the Republic of Ireland the MHTI have negotiated permission to access underground abandoned mine workings with the Exploration and Mining Division (EMD) of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. EMD are responsible for the majority of abandoned mines and allow MHTI members permission based on having full BCA insurance for our members, BCA insurance for the landowner (the Minister) indemnifying him from MHTI members claims. We also have a safety policy (following NAMHO models). Each underground visit must be requested in advance with EMD and permission secured separately for each occasion.

Consequently each member must abide by these rules to ensure continued access. If you are considering undertaking any underground visits outside of organized MHTI planned activities you will need to request permission from EMD in advance (unless the mineral rights are privately held, in which case the landowner controls access, not EMD).

If you need advice on any aspect of this, please contact Martin Critchley or Matthew Parkes or any director of MHTI, also for the contact details of EMD.

Surface visits are at the discretion of the landowner, which in some sites, such as Avoca, is also EMD.

JOURNAL OF THE MHTI 2008

Our apologies that the 2008 Journal has been delayed, due to the Editor's overloaded schedule. It should be completed and posted out in the next few weeks. As ever, contributions for the next issue are welcomed, or indications of prospective contributions.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome new member Terry Dunne, and new library subscriber John Craig to MHTI. As always we need new members to sustain the Trust and encourage all members to persuade their fellow mining heritage enthusiasts to join whenever possible.



Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland / Iontaobhas Oidhreachta Mianadóireachta
36 Dame Street, Dublin 2

Notice of
Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that an Annual General Meeting of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland Ltd. will be held at Monksland Church, Bunmahon, Co. Waterford on Saturday 23rd May 2009 at 12.00 noon.

Agenda

1. To receive the accounts of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland Ltd. for 2008
2. To appoint auditors
3. To elect up to 3 new directors

Signed,

Nigel Monaghan,
Company Secretary

.....

MINING HERITAGE TRUST OF IRELAND Ltd.

Proxy Form

I/We....., of in the County of being a member/members of the above named Company, hereby appoint or failing him of..... as my/our proxy to vote for me/us on my/our behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held on 23rd May 2009 and at any adjournment thereof.

Signed

Dated

This form must be with the Secretary (Mr Nigel Monaghan, National Museum of Ireland, Merrion Street, Dublin 2) at least 48 hours before the AGM (23rd May 2009). Proxies do not need to be members of MHTI.

Directors: D. Cowman, M. Critchley (UK), J. Morris, M. Carragher, B. Jones (NZ), N. Monaghan, M. Parkes (UK), S. Walsh., A. Lings (UK) Registered in Ireland. No. 340387. **Registered Office:** 36 Dame Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Directors of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland Ltd.

The following are Directors of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland; as elected at the 2007 AGM held in Nenagh in 2008

M.F. Critchley
M. Parkes*
D. Cowman
N. Monaghan*
B. Jones
S. Walsh
E. Duffy**
M. Carragher
J. Morris
A. Lings

* Resigning Director, eligible for re-election and willing to offer for re-election

** Resigned Director as of February 2009, not available for re-election

We would welcome any other nominations for Directors. A person nominated as a Director can only be an existing member and they should be proposed by two other members using the form below:

.....

MINING HERITAGE TRUST OF IRELAND Ltd.

Directors Proposal Form

Name of Proposed Director	Proposed Signature	Date
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Name of Proposer	Proposer's Signature	Date
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Name of Seconder	Seconder's Signature	Date
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This form must be with the Secretary (Mr Nigel Monaghan, National Museum of Ireland, Merrion Street, Dublin 2) at least 48 hours before the AGM (23rd May 2009).

[Please photocopy this form or request a duplicate copy if you want to keep Newsletter intact]

MHTI AT A CROSSROADS

It is apparent to the Directors of the MHTI that we are at something of a crossroads. 13 years have passed with several major achievements to note:

- The conservation works at Allihies
- Conservation works at Tankardstown
- Copper Coast Geopark INTERREG projects
- Avoca based INTERREG and other projects
- Support for local groups in developing their own mining heritage at Castlecomer, Avoca, Arigna, Glengowla, and others
- Advising the NRA regarding Derrylea mine
- Conservation works at Silvermines
- Green Mines project at Silvermines
- Advising EMD on mining heritage at Silvermines
- A regular newsletter
- An annual journal
- MINET and Europamines projects
- Fieldvisits to active and abandoned mine sites all over Ireland
- Minesite inventory work, partly in co-operation with EMD
- Co-hosted the Historical Metallurgy Society Annual Meeting in 2007
- Hosted the 2003 NAMHO Meeting at Avoca
- International field trips
- Active support and participation from mainly Shropshire based UK members

It is now apparent that the membership is steady in number but modest and the MHTI will probably only ever be a small group of enthusiasts. Whilst joint trips with other groups such as the Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland and the Irish Geological Association have improved numbers on some recent trips, there is often a modest attendance on trips and meetings that have taken considerable effort to organize.

A bigger problem is the lack of new blood – every year it is almost impossible to find any new Directors to take on roles on the Board, or even volunteers to ‘co-opt’ for specific projects, without involving themselves in wider responsibilities.

Amongst present directors of the MHTI there has been a decision not to be lead partner in any further INTERREG projects in the near future, although MHTI may still be involved in some applications which are to be submitted very soon. One in particular, may bring new actions for Castlecomer, North Tipperary slate mining and perhaps Valentia as well as possible archival work based in the Copper Coast, and a group replicating Bronze Age casting experimentally.

Despite this, it would seem that most members are not likely to engage further with MHTI activities – or are you? If you have read this far, then we would value

your views and opinions. We have not constructed a formal questionnaire but would ask that you consider what you want out of MHTI, what you are willing to put into MHTI and let us know.

For example:

- Do you value fieldtrips to different parts of Ireland?
- Would you prefer only overseas excursions, feeling you have been to most of the ‘good stuff’ in Ireland?
- Are you more interested in talks, workshops or other more research based approaches?
- Do you really just want to get the newsletter or journal and hear about what is going on, but not be in a position to actively participate?
- Do you have any particular expertise you can offer?
- Are you willing to become a Director and attend Board meetings to actually run the MHTI into the future?
- What kind of events and activities do you like?

As part of discussions about where we are going Alastair Lings drew up a plan of possible programme events and styles. This is reproduced below.

Your views and thoughts, preferences, objections or constructive offers of support and participation are sought. MHTI is only as good as its component parts – if it is not satisfying the needs and aspirations of the members then things need to change. Unless members participate in a debate or discussion about where MHTI is going, it is very hard to plan for the future.

Proposed events plan, for discussion

Events types

- Lectures
- Conferences
- Members evening, E.G. dinner / slides / minerals / artefacts / documents
- Surface tours
- Underground tours
- Surface work parties, E.G. inventories, archaeological surveying
- Underground work parties, E.G. digs

Aims

- to provide a variety of events to attract and retain members
- to provide a formal event every two months
- to hold one weekend tour / work party in each province, each year (sites could be revisited on a five-year cycle, but this may still be a problem in Connaught)
- to visit one working mine each year (mines could be revisited on a five year cycle)
- to hold one regional conference every four years, rotating around the provinces (EG Ulster 2010, Leinster 2014, Munster 2018). The conference would have an associated tour over the weekend.
- to hold one NAMHO conference every 20 years (E.G 2022). This would replace the regional conference.

Strategy

- maximise opportunities by having one weekends tour during Heritage Week and the AGM during another weekends tour / work party

- -get help by organising joint events with similar organisations (E.G. IHAI, IGA, IAEG)
- -avoid clashes with the events of similar organisations (if possible)

Proposed Annual Programme

- January: Members evening
- March: Weekend tour / work party and AGM (Driest period in Ulster)
- May: Weekend tour / work party (Driest period in Connaught and Munster)
- July: Weekend tour / work party
- September: Weekend tour during Heritage Week
- November: Annual Lecture

A.S. Lings

Contact **Matthew Parkes** for information **087-122 1967** or mparkes@museum.ie, or write to **Natural History Museum, Merrion Street, Dublin 2**
WE NEED YOUR VIEWS

FAMILY TWIGG

Mr John F Craig has recently contacted MHTI looking for information regarding his research into his family history. His research is into his mining ancestors, the TWIGG family, who were living in County Monaghan in the period 1836 to 1844, although possibly at other mines in Ireland in part of that period.

If anyone has information that would assist Mr Craig, such as a cost book or other register that would place someone of the name Twigg at a mine or two, it would be greatly appreciated.

Mr Craig has more details to indicate that family members were in Ireland during the time period, although they were miners in the English Lake District and the Peak District afterwards.

If you can help, please contact Mr Craig directly at 13 Downsview Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 2JT, UK

REMINDER - 4TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL MINING HISTORY

The "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Altbergbau Odenwald" and the "Institute Europa Subterranea" would like to invite you to attend the 4th International Symposium on archaeological Mining History from the 29th of May until the 1st of June 2009 at Rohrbach near Reichelsheim in Odenwald, Germany. The motto of this years symposium is „Recognition, Investigation and Preservation", which contains, next to the historical research and project presentations, trading and discussing new research methods for surface and underground fieldwork, but also the presentation and development of new strategies in public affairs and geo-tourism and their role in the protection and preservation of mining heritage. For further information, see First Circular and website www.bergbau-odenwald.de

Glück auf, Jochen Babist

REMINDER - INSTITUTO EUROPA SUBTERRANEA

Relics of ancient mining activities are part of our European cultural landscape. Since humans learned to apply tools the extraction of stone, ores and mineral resources left its traces in the terrain. Many detailed questions about early mining techniques, the processing of extracted raw materials and also about the meaning of the mining and quarry industries for the social- economic structure and the development of settlements remain unanswered. Regarding these questions, archaeological methods could provide us with new resolution.

<http://www.bergbau-odenwald.de/>

The IES is happy to announce that the book for this years symposium can also be pre-ordered by people who are not able to attend the symposium, but who are interested in the subjects and research of our participants.

The book will cost EUR 39,95 per copy (excl. P&P EUR 7,- domestic mail, EUR 10,- international shipping). This offer is limited to the 1st of May 2009, there will be no further copies available after the symposium.

Jacquo Silvertant, editor.

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RETROSPECTIVE REVIEWS

- "“A public Benefit”: Sir Vere Hunt, Bart and the town of New Birmingham, Co. Tipperary, 1800-18” in *Surveying Ireland’s Past: Multidisciplinary Essays in Honour of Annagret Simms*, ed Clarke, H.B., Prunty J., Hennessey M. (Dublin 2004). [Refs to collieries pp. 422, 427, 435, 447-8].

Among the primary sources used by Willie Nolan (whom I thank for sending me a copy) are the diaries of Vere Hunt who had been born at Slieveardagh in 1761. In these Hunt does not make clear what relationship he saw between the aspiration that lay behind the name “New Birmingham” and the coal resources on his land at Glangoole (=glen of coal). Perhaps the building of the town, starting in 1802, was influenced by an optimistic report of 1800 on the coal potential which had been worked by Vere’s father but was by then idle. However, most of his focus on building the town seemed to have been in creating markets, building church, school and other civic structures.

Another report on the resources of Glangoole in 1813 possibly renewed his interest but the method he choose

was inherently flawed. By 1814 he had encouraged his tenant farmers to dig pits and extract coal for him. Naturally it was in their interest to hide from him what was abstracted, a matter which he was bitter about. There was another model available as his friend and neighbour at Coalbrook, Charles Langely, was directly employing 150 men at the same time in a co-ordinated operation and had a steam pumping engine.

By the time of Vere Hunt's death in 1818 New Birmingham was already on its way to ruin. A survey of 1831 sums up its potential: "*Besides coal these mines produce clay strata well adapted for bricks and culinary utensils; they also produce iron stone well adapted for the iron furnace for both which purposes New Birmingham was built ---- by the late Sir Vere Hunt, but his speculation has long since been abandoned*".

.....

- Simonin, L & Bristow, H.W., *Underground Life: or mines and Miners*, (London 1869; undated facsimile republication by Kessinger Publishing – www.kessinger.net).

The only introductory comment made about this is an apology for the quality of reproduction which indeed is not very good in places but there is no excuse for not stating when this apparently 21st century hard cover facsimile was made. Also, the table of illustrations includes sixteen in colour in the original which are in meaningless black and white here. Nevertheless it is certainly a worthwhile reproduction of what most people will have never heard of it (I thank Mike Sweeney for his gift of a copy).

To judge from the original Prefaces, this is based on *La Vie Souterraine* translated into English by Mr. Bristow who added additional material, particularly on British mines. However, the scope of it is world-wide mining in the 1860s and its particular strength is how these are illustrated, particularly the underground scenes. The reality would be pools of yellow candlelight without any context but adding an artificial glow of white light allows depiction of what would actually have been happening.

Of its 500+ pages of text., the first 74 are devoted to Coal; the bulk of 400 pages to metalliferous mines ranging from chapters on "The stages of the Human race" to a contemporary "Wealth of Nations"; a short final section deals with "Mines of Precious Stones" and it finishes with a just adequate contemporary four-page index.

A GLIMPSE INTO A MINING COMMUNITY C.1870

Niki Pidd from Australia, paying her first visit to Ireland (DC met her 30th Oct. 2008), had with her a letter sent by her G.G.G. Grandparents, Michael and Joanna Walsh of Knockmahon, to their only child, Peter. He was born in 1838, married Margaret Nugent

in 1861, at the end of that year had a baby, Michael, and a year later the family of three embarked on the *Red Jacket* for Melbourne, according to a family tree that Niki also had with her. Eight years passed and the parents in Knockmahon heard nothing of Peter and family. This silence was heightened by the fact their nephew, John Walsh, had emigrated to Sidney but wrote monthly to his parents. Michael and Joanna could only conclude that their son and family had perished. Then, to their astonishment, a letter arrived from Peter. The letter Niki had was Michael's reply dated 9th April 1871.

Of relevance here are the asides giving news of the mines (punctuation only altered): *My Dear Son, there was a new engine built within three or four yards of our house --- and a shaft also sunk in a corner in the haggard 60 fathoms deep and we are informed that there was 6 feet solid ore cut in this new shaft in the last three days.*

Tankardstown Mines is not much use now, it's bet ---. A great deal of the miners having been disemployed now for the past month, some going to England, more to Berehaven, County Cork, more to America and such places. I hope and expect that we shall have better news respecting the miners than we have at present."

The "better news" never arrived although Tankardstown did struggle on for another eight years. What is surprising however was the "engine" so close to their house but perhaps, among other possibilities, it was the portable steam engine that was used on the cliffs west of Bunmahon. Less explicable was that the company had gone back to sink shafts in Knockmahon which had been abandoned about 1850 due to flooding. Sixty fathoms (360 feet) would have been well below sea level so this must have been on an unknown other lode on Knockmahon townland (for context, see Cowman 1996).

Perhaps the most revelatory aspect of the letter was the sensitivity and love expressed by the illiterate Michael (the physical writing was done by his niece, Joanna Walsh) towards his son: "*I was continually dreaming of you, every night, for you are My Dear Child our daily thoughts and nightly dreams.* His wife also dreamt that she saw their boat coming into Stage Cove nearby. He gives family news and passes on "*their best love and respect*". In a postscript he refers to his grandson Michael who was now nine years old: "*Give him Kisses from me and your mother. If only I could embrace him in my arms, I would give him a thousand with Cead Mille Failthe.*"

Such social insight is unique, not only for the mining community but for the wider society at the time.
Des Cowman

ANTRIM FIELD TRIP 17th – 19th JULY 2009

Early mining and quarrying in the NE of Ireland

This fieldtrip will explore neolithic flint and porcellanite extraction sites from Belfast to Rathlin Island, and some of the coal mines east of Ballycastle. On the Friday we will visit sites northwards from Belfast. Members can join the excursion en route. Access to Rathlin depends on wind conditions. If we cannot get to the island on the Saturday, we will interchange Saturday and Sunday's itineraries. Rathlin Island Ferry Ltd (028 2076 9299) recommend that passengers book in advance. The return fare is £10.60. The fare for groups of more than 12 people is £9 each. **If you want the Coordinator to reserve you a place on the ferry, please contact him before 31st May.**

Coordinator: Alastair Lings
alastairlings@yahoo.co.uk
Home: (Scotland +44) 01896 757861
Mobile: +44 7763 850087

The Ordnance Survey Glens of Antrim Activity Map (1:25 000 scale) covers all the sites, excluding Belfast. Please note that mobile phone reception may be poor in the area, with no Vodaphone coverage at Ballycoos and Tievebulliagh, and almost no reception at Murlough Bay.

Friday 17th July

1030 hours, meet at the Quaker Cottage Family Support Centre (J296 744), 400 metres north of where Whiterock and Ballygomartin Roads meet in West Belfast. Discovery map sheet 15.

-spectacular view of Belfast,
-Site of flint factories, close to probable source of raw materials (Ballymagarry, Ballymurphy and Black Mountain sites).

1200 hours, meet at the Cairndhu Golf Club, Ballygalley (D381 075). When heading north of Larne on the Causeway Coastal Route (A 2), the entrance is 400 m north of the Carnfunnock Country Park. The turn in to the Golf Club is adjacent to the sign. Map 9.
-site of opencast flint mine (Ballygalley Hill),
-spectacular viewpoint.

1330 hours, meet at the viewpoint at the head of the valley west of Cairncastle (D333 072). Map 9.
-flint quarry and spoil heaps, probably prehistoric (Ballycoos).

1500 hours, meet near the barn after the (first) gate at the head of Cloghs Road, Cushendall (D204 276). Map 5. Leave Cushendall on the northbound Causeway Coastal Route (A 2). After 500 m turn left over the Glennann River, and immediately take the first right on to Cloghs Road. (Signposted to Cullentra House and Garron View B&Bs.)

-porcellanite outcrops,
-site of porcellanite axe factory (Tievebulliagh)

-spoil heaps,
-old chalk workings.

Saturday 18th July

0900 hours, meet at Ballycastle Ferry Terminal, 18 Bayview Road (off North Street) (D121 415). Map 5. Check-in by 0915, depart for Rathlin Island at 0930. Returning on the 1630 sailing. We will use the Puffin Bus on the island: £6 return to the West Lighthouse.

-West Lighthouse,
-Porcellanite workings (Brockley),
-Fortified mound, possible site of royal palace (Doomore),
-interbasaltic iron ores (Cantruan),
-Bruce's Castle (Coal cinders in the mortar suggest early local mining),
-Boathouse Visitor Centre.

Sunday 19th July

0900 hours, meet at Ballycastle Ferry Terminal, 18 Bayview Road (off North Street) (D121 415).

-Murlough Bay Collieries,
-Colliers Row, Ballyreagh Lower,
-Ballyvoy Jetty,
-Pollard Colliery,
-North Star Colliery (underground access)

Accommodation

A wide range of accommodation is available in Ballycastle, contact the Tourist Information Office for details: 028 2076 2024, www.moyle-council.org. Information on accommodation in Belfast is available from the Welcome Centre, 028 9024 6609. Callers from the Republic replace the 028 number with 048. The following accommodation is close to the ferry terminal. The prices quoted are for a single person and should be checked before booking.

- Glenluce Guest House, Neal McBrearty
42 Quay Road, 028 2076 2914, £30.
- Corratavey House, Mrs C White
40 Quay Road, 028 2076 2845, £30.
- Fragrens, Mrs V Greene
34 Quay Road, 028 2076 2168 / 2181
- Amiroy House, Mrs Marion Crawford
24 Quay Road, 028 2076 2621
- Beechwood, Mrs Roz McAuley
9 Beechwood Avenue, 028 2076 3631, £30.
- Marine Hotel,
1-3 North Street, 028 2076 2222, £65.
- Ballycastle Backpackers, Ms Anne Marie Gormley
4 North Street, 028 2076 3612.
- Ardaghmore, Mrs G McLemon
35 North Street, 028 2076 3329, £30.
- Kenmara House, Mr Ernie Shannon
45 North Street, 028 2076 2600, £28.