

HERITAGE REVIEW

No.3

Spring 2000



JENNYMOUNT MILL

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EDITORIAL

Those of us who have been members of the UAHS for many years tend to take for granted its quite extraordinary range of activity. New members, and men on the Clapham omnibus, may have a very vague idea of how much we actually do, and as part of a current exercise of addressing district councils we have printed a short “manifesto” outlining our aims and now extremely various activities in order to explain our work. The booklet (which has been described as looking a bit like a tract!) is available from the Society’s office, but it might be of interest to summarise it here.

The UAHS was founded in 1967, at a time when there was no statutory listing in the province, no historic buildings grants, no conservation areas, and no public buildings record. All those things now exist, and the Society played no small part in their formation. The Society continues to comment on planning legislation in general, and on up to two hundred individual applications every year that adversely affect our built environment. We have a number of voluntary planning monitors, now ably assisted by a full time staff member. On particularly significant issues, we will lobby councils, support residents’ groups or raise the problem in the media. We also take part in planning appeals where significant buildings or general issues of concern are at stake.

Our publications, which now run to over seventy items ranging from the old lists to the new gazetteers, and from regular series like the Buildings at Risk catalogues to the glamorous county books Sir Charles Brett has produced in recent years, are used by planners, architects, estate agents, historians - and by ourselves! We provide speakers for local historical societies and organise conferences to discuss particular issues, many of which have led on to new initiatives. We also regularly provide advice on building restoration and planning matters.

The Buildings at Risk project has publicised nearly a hundred neglected buildings that have been brought back into productive use, and many more that we hope will find new owners in due course. Hearth, which is run jointly by the UAHS and the National Trust, now manages nearly a hundred houses in restored buildings, and has been involved in the restoration of many more. This year we will be employing an Education Officer for the first time, who will raise the awareness of our built heritage in schools.

And you thought we just organised a programme of outings and lectures for our members! Even our events calendar this year is more crowded than usual, with a whole series of additional lectures. Forgive us for blowing our own trumpet, but we were not altogether surprised when a letter to the Belfast Telegraph last November accidentally referred to us as “the Royal Architectural Heritage Society”!

The Society is dead - long live the Society!

Those of you who attend our AGM each year will have noticed that the February 1999 one was unusually bureaucratic. This was because of the legal procedures involved in converting the old style Society into what is technically a limited company. The old Society is no more, but its name and in effect its entire operations have been taken over by the new company.

Almost every form of activity is affected by new regulations of increasing complexity, and the reasons for adopting limited company status included the need to ensure that future operations were not impeded by the risk of personal liability to members and officers. While officers have no desire to incur unnecessary risks in the operation of the Society's affairs, it had been a matter of concern for some time that they and members could become personally liable in the event of possible claims or litigation.

As a limited company, the Society itself became a separate legal entity. Subject to various controls and qualifications, it is now the Society, and not its officers or members, which is responsible in law for its conduct and actions. The Society's affairs are conducted by what is now legally a Board of Directors. The legal formalities required by our new status require careful attention, but the actual operation of the Society on a day to day basis remains largely unchanged.

The complex transition to a limited company was carried out with considerable ease, thanks to the efforts of Peter Rankin, our solicitor, and our treasurer, Keith McCleane, both of whom spent many hours in charting a way through the very considerable paperwork involved; and of course the skilful guidance of our President who chaired the meeting with his usual aplomb.

Mailings

The demise of the Arts Council's invaluable Artslink service through which we used to be able to mail the membership at very modest costs has meant we have had to drastically curtail our mailing over the last year or two, as a complete mailing amounts to about £350. We are trying to maintain a bi-monthly mailing. This is not ideal, but we hope you will bear with us in the interest of efficient running of the Society's finances. As we now "stuff" our own envelopes, Joan Kinch is very preoccupied for a few days putting the material for each mailing together, and we would welcome additional volunteer assistance with this. If you have time on your hands and would like to get involved please ring Joan on Belfast 550213. No experience is necessary! Expert knowledge of historic buildings is not required!

Volunteers

The UAHS has always welcomed volunteers willing to assist in the many varied tasks that need to be undertaken. Indeed it has always been run by a committee of volunteers, and although the paid staff has grown in recent years it still relies heavily on their enthusiasm and dedication. The staff are very grateful to receive occasional help from volunteers, whether in the more mundane aspects of office work or assisting with particular research.

Over the past few years we have had some very accomplished helpers including Douglas Black and Ruth Connolly (both planning graduates from Dundee who went on to work for Consarc on the Second Survey), the formidably learned historian William Roulston (now studying for a PhD on 17th century Ulster), and Sophia Cross (now working for Craigavon Museum and running the Dromore THI). We have also had some shorter stay helpers recently - Clare Hodgkinson (also from the planning course in Dundee), Alan Oliver, whose help was invaluable in the lead up to the SOS conference, Rebecca Price, an American heritage studies graduate, and currently Delia Graham, an art graduate from Nottingham who may well move into conservation. We are grateful to them all and though our office is cramped, there is always a corner that can be cleared to accommodate them.

Royal Visit

The Society was honoured with a visit from the Duke of Gloucester in May. The Duke is of course an architect himself (unlike the more famous architectural spokesman of the Royal family!), and took a professional interest in the Society's projects. Our President Sir Charles Brett greeted the Duke, and Peter Marlow presented two of our recent publications to him at a small reception attended by members of the Committee. Before going on to visit a Hearth scheme at College Square North, he spoke at some length to Harriet Devlin our BAR officer, and Rita Harkin our research officer, and commented favourably on the Society's work. Not only that, he even plugged our books during his visits the next day, when he asked members of the Royal Ulster Yacht Club whether they had seen our new book on Bangor!



The Duke of Gloucester with Rita Harkin (centre) and Harriet Devlin.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The Society made written representations and attended public examinations about the planning document set to act as the backdrop for the next 25 years of development in Northern Ireland. This regional framework document, *Shaping Our Future*, does address the merits of retaining and restoring buildings, but we share the concerns of some others that it is merely an aspirational document because the methods of implementation remain unclear.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has developed a Cultural Tourism Strategy which aims to act as a guide for the development of tourism initiatives which help tell “the story of Northern Ireland”. The Society has argued that tourists expect to see buildings which form a tangible link with the past and lend a sense of place, and this takes into account the importance of the built heritage as a tourist asset.

Belfast City Council has appointed a Heritage Officer working within the Arts and Heritage team, Briony Crozier. They have also devised a most welcome draft Heritage Strategy for Belfast. The Society is delighted that the Council is becoming involved in this area and we anticipate forging good partnerships with and through the Council. One such partnership has already been established in the Greater Belfast Heritage Network, chaired by John Gray.

DRAFT PLANNING LEGISLATION

The failings of the ATC designations and the failure to protect other buildings which do not fall within a conservation area nor have listed building status, can perhaps only be remedied by a redefinition of demolition as “development”.

Proposed amendments to legislation introduced in draft in April include a provision for the requirement (with some exceptions) for planning permission to demolish buildings. The new legislation would also increase fines for unauthorised demolition from a maximum of £5,000 to £20,000, and introduce “spot” or temporary listing - both vital to the protection of our built heritage. Some measures in the new proposals aim to simplify enforcement procedures and it is hoped that this will give planning law affecting the built heritage more teeth and also make it easier to apply, so that it will be used more often. The Society has made written submissions to the Planning Service strongly supporting the amendments and the Assembly members have been alerted to the importance of adopting the legislation. At this stage however no date has been set for the implementation of the legislation.

EDUCATION

The UAHS was delighted to receive an offer of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to employ an education officer who will organise a tailored programme for primary school children from ages 8 to 11 (Key Stage 2). This three-year project, which will start in 2000, is to be assisted by partnership funding from Ulster Garden Villages, the Elizabeth Ellison Charitable Trust and the Esmée Mitchell Trust. We are grateful to each for their support.

Of course learning is a life long experience and the Society is keen to develop its adult education programme as well. To this end Rita Harkin organised a series of walking tours of central Belfast in connection with the Institute for Continuing Education at Queen's University Belfast. They were followed by a programme of ten lectures entitled *Aspects of Ulster Architecture*, which proved to be very popular. Eloquent and entertaining slide presentations were given by representatives of the UAHS, Environment and Heritage Service, the Historic Buildings Council and the Federation of Ulster Local Studies. Besides the architectural revelations, memorable moments included Douglas Black's innovative use of a walking stick as a pointer, a mysterious smouldering overhead projector, and the disappearance of a screen, whipped out of sight without warning.

There are other educational projects under way. Architects and planners are enrolling in the new conservation course run by RSUA and Queen's University. The University of Ulster has launched a Cultural Heritage Centre based in Magee College, and we intend to exploit such opportunities to target third level education. We are encouraged to note that the Planning Service did hold one and two day conservation courses last year conducted by Dick Oram. Education within the Planning Service is an area which needs to be greatly developed, since the planning process is intrinsic to conservation. We are often at the mercy of planner's decisions, and constant letters, phone calls and representations from UAHS and other organisations can only slightly tinge their perspective. Conservation is way down the list of priorities for most planners and this stark reality needs to be urgently addressed. Of course beside the issue of technical and professional skills, it is important that the attitudes of all rungs of society are altered to view old buildings as assets, not liabilities.

Liverpool is redeveloping very quickly. We are trying to preserve those areas used regularly by film crews. Millennium regeneration projects tend to be of steel and glass construction... that could only suit a very contemporary film setting. (*Liverpool Film Office officer Lynn Saunders, setting up protected "film zones" around historic parts of the city, whose Victorian and Georgian streets bring in up to £10m annually from film production companies*).

PLANNING MONITOR'S DAY

This event was held on a warm summer's day in early July at Clotworthy Arts Centre, Antrim. The listed building was an ideal venue in which to debate issues such as current policy and legislation and to discuss the finer details of real planning applications which affect buildings of merit. The day was enriched by a lunchtime tour of Clotworthy House gardens, guided by committee member and garden historian Terence Reeves-Smyth. We were delighted that so many of our voluntary monitors were able to attend and willing to share their experience and expertise in such an animated and generous manner. The Society feels these events are extremely useful and we look forward to seeing you all again next year. If you would like to participate in future sessions, please contact the office.

ASSEMBLY AND COUNCILS

The new Assembly came into being quite suddenly after months of wrangling, and we are having to get used to a lot of new concepts. Some have suggested that the present system of councils is likely to change dramatically, with some disappearing and others being amalgamated into super-councils. Nevertheless while they are still in existence they are an important part of the planning process, and the Society had already commenced a programme of making deputations to councils before the Assembly came into being.

We started with North Down Borough Council, where our speakers were received with open arms in view of local concern about the loss of historic buildings in the Borough. The Society hopes shortly to meet the Environment Committee of the Assembly (if it is not suspended, as looks likely as we go to press), and we will continue to visit councils to disseminate our views and lobby local opinion.

The new Minister for the Environment in the Assembly, Sam Foster, is supported by Rev William McCrea as Chairman of his Committee, and Carmel Hanna as Deputy Chairman. The other members are Tom Benson, Joan Carson, Arthur Doherty, David Ford, James Leslie, Mitchel McLaughlin, Mick Murphy, Edwin Poots and Denis Watson.

We do not need tourism to destroy the fabric of life in Ireland - we are doing a tolerably good job of that ourselves thank you... We have favoured the house-in-every-field school of rural planning; and by the time we have reached the glorious figure of eight million tourists in a year, there will hardly be left in the Republic a single field unfavoured by some assembly or other of turrets, porticos, arches, mock cladding, Tudor beams and numerous concrete thingummies... What we are doing is irreversible; we are pillaging a delightful landscape and remorselessly destroying communities and their local cultures right across the country... We might indeed have eight million tourists a year by 2004; but they will probably just come to laugh. (*An Irishman's Diary, Irish Times*)

MIWADI

The Society enjoyed a very happy collaboration in 1999 with Miwadi, sponsors of the cultural heritage awards. We assisted in judging a primary school competition where pupils were asked to do a project on any aspect of heritage in their area. Hundreds of schools across Ireland responded with great enthusiasm, and the overall winners emerged as Kilrea Primary School which chose the Fairy Thorn tree as their subject. Buildings featured strongly in the finalists' wild and wonderful submissions. The Society is grateful for a generous donation received from MiWadi.

WEB SITES AND THE INTERNET

It seemed last year as if every organisation was constructing a web site. Some seem to remain under construction for many months, like buildings, but certainly as the new millennium dawned it had become apparent that this is an advertising medium where people expect to be able to find every organisation. The Society now has an e-mail address at uahs@btinternet.com and we intend to develop a web site before the next issue of Heritage Review lands on your doorstep.

In the summer, we set up a useful meeting in London with SAVE, English Heritage, the Welsh Civic Trust, the 20th Century Society and the Irish Georgian Society. We share common goals and problems, and this provided a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas. The main topic under discussion was the potential use of the internet for buildings at risk and other aspects of conservation. The benefits and dangers of this highly fashionable tool were elucidated by SAVE, who have a site at www.savebritainsheritage.org.uk.

An excellent site, aimed at schools (but fascinating for any age group), has been devised by the Historic Buildings Council with the Northern Ireland Centre for Learning Resources. Entitled Time Trail to the Millennium, the site can be found at www.niclr.com/timequest.

If you are interested in browsing through other conservation sites, perhaps you would like to drop in on the following: www.archeire.com/igs (Irish Georgian Society), www.english-heritage.org.uk, www.landmarktrust.co.uk, www.ahss.org.uk (Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland), www.nationaltrust.org.uk, and www.buildingconservation.com.

English Heritage says that it would cost £400m to repair all the [Grade I and II*] buildings at risk, some 1,615 buildings. This is less than is being allotted to the Millennium Dome, which is a temporary structure. (*Richard Holder, senior architectural advisor to the Victorian Society, Building Design, Oct 1999*).

HOLIDAY HOMES AND HOUSING NEED

While the countryside continues to be destroyed by new building, a further threat has been coming into focus. It is generally assumed that the bungalow blight is caused by developers building speculatively on land permitted by successive releases of land on the edge of towns, or by farmers building new houses for their children on their agricultural land. It is now apparent that there is a substantial market in new holiday homes, conventional houses which happen to be lived in only in the summer months, and which are therefore not "necessary" new development. It is one thing to say that people have a right to live in a certain area if they so wish, but do they have a right to spoil the view for others simply so that they can stay there for a month in the summer?

The Society is not generally concerned with new building outside urban areas, but the continuing attrition of our countryside has to be a concern for everyone. Councillors on the north coast say that the percentage of second homes in resorts like Castlerock and Portballintrae now stands at over 50%, occupied by people with no real commitment to the community either socially or economically, and that they are destroying the very qualities that attracted them to the villages in the first place.

Unfortunately the planning system does not generally control occupation, and in attempting to ensure that a development of eight new houses near Portrush was restricted to holiday use the planners lost an appeal early in 1999. The development, approved by the planners on the basis that it was only to provide short term holiday accommodation under one ownership that would be enjoyed by a large number of people for short times, can now become permanent second homes that detract from the natural beauty of the area yet remain empty for much of the year. It would appear that it is possible to devise a new policy that would restrict such developments in future, but the planning system is so stretched by the current pressure of applications that such policies seem to arrive only after the horse has bolted.

Portballintrae is like a ghost town in the winter. Young people are being forced out of the village because they cannot buy property in it. (Coleraine mayor Norman Hillis, Belfast Telegraph 11 September 1999).

The planning system cannot control sales of existing or new dwellings, nor is it possible in planning terms to distinguish between homes that will be used for holiday purposes and homes that will be used for permanent occupation. (Philip Maguire, Principal Information Officer DoE, letter to Belfast Telegraph 8 Oct 1999)

BUILDINGS AT RISK

The sixth volume of Buildings at Risk had a very dramatic launch at the Ormeau Baths in March 1999. During the event the fire alarms went off and all the guests were ushered out onto the street claspng their plates of chicken casserole as two fire engines arrived and hosepipes were trained on the building!

In some ways it is discouraging that buildings of significant merit continue to be unappreciated, and that urban and rural dereliction is still so prevalent in Northern Ireland. However there are many good restoration schemes of which to be proud. Recent schemes in Belfast include St George's Market, McHugh's Bar, St Patrick's School, Tedford's Ship Chandlers, the apartment scheme at Somerset Mill, the Carnegie Library, the former Lyttle & McCausland warehouse (now transformed into the McCausland Hotel) and the dramatic restoration of the derelict terrace at College Square North. Investment in the restoration of redundant buildings is not confined to Belfast and there are significant schemes throughout the Province, such as the Derry First Primary School; an imaginative cross community scheme at Markethill Courthouse; a private scheme at Dyan Mill; Dufferin Place, Killyleagh; Cromore Halt in Portstewart, where the station has been converted into apartments; and the lockkeeper's cottage in Benburb. These schemes should not be taken in isolation as their restoration very often has a large ripple effect on the local economy, resulting in the regeneration of nearby streets.

The most exciting regeneration scheme happening in the Province at the present time is the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), a major scheme funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund aiming to repair and restore the historic fabric of buildings within Conservation Areas. The

seven successful schemes in 1998 were reported on in BAR 6 - about £4 million going to schemes in Caledon, Omagh, Downpatrick, Saintfield, Killough, Moneymore and Draperstown. A further seven schemes were



St Patrick's School, restored by Belfast Buildings Preservation Trust

successful in the initial competitive bidding round in 1999, and a third bidding round will occur in 2000. These THI schemes will have an enormous impact on the cores of our most historic towns and villages. They will not only restore buildings, bring upper floor space back into use, and find new uses for redundant buildings, but will lead to economic regeneration and revitalisation, and will knock many of the buildings featured in Buildings at Risk into the "Good News - SAVED" category.

BAR SEVEN YEARS ON

Sing on, with hymns uproarious,
Ye humble and aloof,
Look up! and oh how glorious
He has restored the roof! (*John Betjeman*)

A photograph in a recent Belfast Telegraph showed a familiar thatched vernacular cottage in a rural area. It had appeared in BAR2 in a dilapidated state. Today it certainly looks good: the windows and doors are sound and it is painted and limewashed, the surroundings tidy with no inappropriate planting. It was gratifying to see it highlighted as a property of character with an asking price of £129,000.

The BAR Project has now been in operation for over seven years in co-operation with the Environment and Heritage Service, and it is perhaps appropriate to survey what it has achieved. It has extended to the production of Directories of Traditional Building Skills, a Directory of Funding, a number of conferences and two presentations at the Homebuilding Exhibitions in the Waterfront Hall. The keystone is, however, the series of BAR Catalogues, distinctive in appearance, eye-catching, readable, erudite, informed and already a valuable archive of architectural, historical and social interest. It is interesting to discover that these are now collectors' items, the early editions already much sought after.

The inspiration and driving force behind the BAR Project was the UAHS Chairman at that time, Primrose Wilson. She had the backing of a sub-committee which had a major input from Dawson Stelfox in the general shaping of the enterprise. The first project officer was Helen Hossack who was responsible for the high quality of the publication and set standards that are universally applauded. She was succeeded by Harriet Devlin who has continued the work to the same high standard and with the same dedication and enthusiasm. The Society is justifiably proud of their work and what has been achieved.

The catalogues deal largely with a wide range of unoccupied buildings, concentrating on listed buildings but with a proportion of buildings in conservation areas and vernacular buildings. While some

are certainly picturesque and others impressive, many are modest and even utilitarian. They range from the 18th century to the 1940s and have included, in addition to the expected domestic, ecclesiastical and industrial buildings, signal boxes, dovecotes, a corbelled stone pigsty, a corpse house, a famine soup kitchen, a bridge, a swimming pool and several monuments. There have been some notable successes in finding new uses - notably several of the Londonderry shirt factories which have been converted to apartments. Gatelodges have also proved popular projects.

Those who remember the long-running and anxious attempts to prevent the deterioration of the Lyttle and McCausland warehouses in Victoria Street have been delighted to see it restored and functioning as a splendid hotel. The forthcoming series of UAHS lectures which will take place in the Arts and Crafts



The Donegall Road Carnegie Library, restored by Andrew Nesbitt Architects for their own offices

Carnegie Library on the Donegall Road will be doubly satisfactory in the knowledge that the building originally featured in BAR2 and has now been splendidly restored to good use.

There have also inevitably been sad losses, some reprehensible like Nos.24-30 Ogle Street in Armagh, Ardmara in Bangor and Clough House near Downpatrick. Others bear witness to the speed of deterioration when buildings are neglected and exposed to the depredations of our damp climate. Looking at Glasdrumman House in BAR4 it is hard to believe that as recently as the late 1970s this had been a handsome dwelling house and a source of pride to its occupants, and subsequently the home of a commune before being abandoned to become the sad relic it is today. Cairndhu on the Antrim coast with its interesting wooden detail, which appeared in BAR2, is also now a cause for grave concern.

The seventh BAR catalogue, now in preparation, is intended to review the earlier publications, highlighting the successes and the agencies which have contributed to these restorations while noting the many problems still remaining. Within the short space of seven years the amount of change is quite striking, and the record proves the urgency of action and the importance of monitoring and publicising the state of the buildings that we value.

BUILDINGS AT RISK: SOS

Buildings awash in a stormy sea, about to founder on jagged rocks. This was Marcus Patton's illustration on the flier for the October *Buildings at Risk: SOS: Some Options and Solutions* conference hosted by the UAHS with support from the Environment & Heritage Service. The international conference was held at the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum, Cultra and the prospect of hearing from high calibre speakers who have thrown out life rafts to save foundering buildings throughout the British Isles attracted a capacity audience of over 150 delegates.

The aim of the conference was to look at the problem of buildings at risk throughout the British Isles - to ascertain what common problems exist, to look at the degree of statutory protection of buildings and the role of grants - the carrot and the stick - and finally to see solutions to many varied building challenges, ranging from the restoration of a single cottage to a countrywide based conservation scheme.

It was a very busy day and involved a cast of 24 speakers drawn from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic as well as a most inspiring contribution from the Netherlands. The Conference was opened by the Minister for the Environment, **Lord Dubs**, who stated that the subject of buildings at risk was not only close to his heart, but one that fits well with the Government policy of sustainability and regeneration. As one of the most pressing problems of buildings at risk is finding the money for restoration, the conference was an appropriate place to launch the Directory of Funds for Historic Buildings in Northern Ireland which was presented to the Minister by Peter Marlow.

The rest of the day fell into three distinct sections: common problems; the legislative framework; and options and solutions. The question of what constitutes a Building at Risk was introduced by **Lady Carswell**, convenor of the BAR committee, and followed through by **Harriet Devlin** who looked at the range of buildings at risk in Northern Ireland.

This led on to a very amusing and provocative talk by **Barry Joyce** who looked at the question of Problem Owners. Barry has worked with Derbyshire County Council for over 22 years and has a wide experience of the nature of both humans and buildings. He categorised owners into various types - the Eccentric, ranging from the stubbornly uncooperative to the clinically insane; the Crook, ranging from the small time confidence trickster to the big time corporate swindler; the Unresponsive, including the totally impassive bureaucrat; the Philistine; and the most dispiriting of them all - the Incompetent. Barry finished his talk saying he welcomes Solution owners, but that they can reveal an equal degree of eccentricity!

Having set the scene, we then moved on to the framework that supports and protects listed buildings. **Hilary Heslip** of the Planning Service gave a comprehensive overview of the statutory framework within Northern Ireland. She also mentioned PPS9, The Enforcement of Planning Control, a policy statement that has big implications in the “stick” aspect of penalising owners who contravene legislation.

The “carrot” in the form of grants to owners was part of the message delivered by **Delcia Keate** of English Heritage. She explained the role of both grants and the use of statutory powers by the local authorities in London and gave some very graphic examples of cases where Urgent Works notices or Repairs Notices had been served on recalcitrant building owners. An Urgent Works notice aims to safeguard a building from further deterioration - to keep the building weathertight, secure and safe from collapse. A Repairs Notice aims to secure permanent works for the long term preservation of the building, and if an owner does not comply a Compulsory Purchase order may be served.

The rest of the day was filled with many examples of positive schemes. **Paul Drury**, an independent heritage consultant, looked at the concept of Enabling Development - whereby a heritage asset such as a building is saved, but simultaneously developed in a way that is sometimes seen as detrimental. A fine tightrope has to be negotiated between preservation and a loss of integrity of the heritage building.

The Building Preservation Trust or BPT movement has been the most active group in the restoration of sinking buildings. **Marcus Patton**, Director of Hearth Revolving Fund, which has been responsible for many exemplary schemes within the Province, gave a comprehensive overview of what has been achieved by BPTs in the province.

The delegates then divided up into groups to look at different scales of projects - Primrose Wilson chaired the group looking at **Small Buildings**, where Dawson Stelfox discussed the problems facing the restoration of vernacular buildings. Peter Marlow of the National Trust chaired the session on **Middle to Large Buildings** with a paper from John Edwards on Cardiff Castle, while Sammy Leslie told us about her efforts to restore and generate an income from her large family home at Castle Leslie, Co Monaghan. Fred Taggart of Regeneration Through Heritage oversaw a lively talk by Jim Arnold of the very impressive New Lanark scheme in Scotland, a view of the proposed scheme for Armagh Gaol presented by Stephen Douglas, the theme being **Industrial/ Institutional Buildings**. The fourth group looked at the largest scale of project - the overall **Town Schemes** as funded by the Heritage Lottery. Kevin Baird of the Heritage Lottery Fund oversaw the talks by Liz Davidson of the Glasgow Preservation

Trust who looked at the impact of THI on Glasgow, and Laurence Manogue who gave an overview of THI schemes in Northern Ireland.

The last two lectures were perhaps the most memorable of the day. The first was an inspiring overview of what co-operation between statutory bodies, charities, planners, restorers and community groups has achieved in an integrated scheme for the whole of Norwich. Too often schemes and buildings are seen in isolation without full reference to their impact on their surroundings, and it was refreshing to hear from **Malcolm Crowder** what an overall vision could accomplish, with all sides accepting compromises where necessary to achieve the best possible result for the historic fabric of the city.

Finally, we returned to the root cause of many buildings being at risk - lack of regular maintenance. An impressive talk was given by **Gert-Jan Luyendyk**, Director of Monumentenwacht, a company based in the Netherlands since 1973. The motto of the organisation is "Prevention is better than cure" and they aim to prevent the deterioration of historic buildings by advising the owners on how to keep their property in good condition. They have about 40 building conservation teams who tour the country offering on the spot maintenance reports and repair work to deal with current problems. By inspecting the fabric of buildings regularly at a relatively minor cost, long term large scale bills are avoided and the buildings remain in better shape. Other countries such as Germany have shown interest in this common sense approach, and a pilot scheme is due to start in England this year. If we could get all house owners to clean their gutters every autumn, or even use ratepayers money to provide such a service, hundreds of thousands of repair costs to the fabric of buildings could be saved.

After a brief discussion **Hilary Weir** of the Architectural Heritage Fund summed up the conference. Over the last years the AHF, and Hilary in particular, have been immensely helpful and generous to the UAHS - indeed Hilary was a major inspiration for the SOS conference and the Directory of Funding. We are greatly in her debt. She eloquently summarised the day with a lot of "p" words: property, preservation, problems, projects, progress, partnerships, professionalism, personalities, prejudices, propaganda, public education, publicity, positive approaches, packaging, philistines, pariahs, politics and powers of politicians to prevent planning problems, patience, priorities, purchases, precedent, parody and pastiche, providence, presentation, pilot projects, PASSION and PARTIES.

On that note the delegates retired to the Transport Gallery at the Museum for a reception kindly hosted by North Down Borough Council, where they admired "Maeve" and other fine engines while mulling over the day's packed events in the company of the Mayor, Marion Smith.

The following day there were two tours looking at buildings saved and in need of rescue. Marcus Patton led a half day tour **Around the Town** looking at the Carnegie Library, Craigavon House & the Somme Hospital. The fine restoration project undertaken by the Belfast Building Preservation Trust at St Patrick's School was lauded, they also looked at the still derelict Riddell Warehouse on Ann Street, and the revitalised McHugh's Bar. The interior of the McCausland Hotel was studied in depth over coffee, and then the group set off on foot taking in buildings on Waring Street, Donegall St, the Hearth Scheme on College Square North and the still derelict Christ Church before they landed back at the Europa.

The other tour, **Into the West**, was led by Harriet Devlin. They started off with a small "polite" vernacular cottage in Kilmore, Co Armagh, becoming invisible behind rampant foliage. From the tiny cottage they went to the biggest BAR of them all - the monumental Gosford Castle, built by Thomas Hopper between 1819 and 1850 for Archibald Acheson, 2nd Earl of Gosford. They were able to see some of the fine interiors that still exist as well as the humungous growth of flourishing dry rot that is galloping through the building due to the leaking roofs. There is interest in the restoration of the building, but it will be an extremely expensive project.

Caroline Maguire, the architect responsible for the scheme, took them round the Markethill Courthouse, a project whose success is due to the endurance and faith of the cross-community group. After lunch they toured the THI scheme at Caledon. Here a great number of funding partners are involved, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Housing Executive, the District Council and European funding. The restoration of the many derelict properties will bring new life to this town whose population had dwindled from 1079 in 1837, to a mere 367 in 1971.

The day finished with hot whiskey, port and lemon offered by the ever generous Primrose and Edward Wilson to welcome the group to their magnificent scheme of mill and cottage renovation at Dyan.

The SOS conference may have left some of the organisers needing resuscitation, but hopefully it inspired the large and interested audience to see that common building problems can be overcome by a combination of many factors - statutory control, excellent practice, access to funding, and enormous enthusiasm and tenacity.

It baffles me that buildings don't fall down more often. People set about working on Georgian and Victorian buildings as if they were dealing with a modern Barratt home, and they ain't. You can't knock them about, bung in an RSJ and expect everything to be OK. These buildings are alive and moving all the time, often in highly eccentric and unpredictable ways. (*Dan Cruikshank, architectural historian, following the collapse of a Victorian house in Bayswater that was being underpinned, November 1998*).

DELISTING

In our last Review, we described the process involved in the “Second Survey” of historic buildings which is in hand. The Society has continued to discuss the matter with Environment and Heritage Service who are responsible for the listing process, and with councillors (many of whom are very worried by the loss from the statutory lists of buildings they consider to be significant). EHS have explained that they are trying to refine the list to make it stronger and “more effective” to enforce. That is an understandable objective, particularly if the list is considered as an end in itself - literally a list of our best surviving buildings. However we would take a broader view and see listing as a very valuable tool not only for preserving what is obviously fine, but also for ensuring that what is potentially fine survives for future restoration and enjoyment. We are also concerned in other words with the buildings that have (sadly) been altered, or that set off other better buildings, or that are currently at risk - those are all categories that are being dropped from the list.

The new list is certainly being carried out to an exemplary standard, with great in-depth research into historical records and complete interior and exterior photographs. It should make enforcement following unauthorised alterations much easier - except that along with the improved records goes the dropping from the list of a considerable number of buildings, and this remains our concern. We disagree that a building should be de-listed simply because its windows have been changed, or because it has an inappropriate modern extension. The planning system should have prevented such despoilation in the first place, and it is essential that it should do so in future.

Most people regard listed buildings as sacrosanct - some are terrified of their buildings being listed in case it means they can never change the colour of their front door or the style of their kitchen units. As word gets out that the listing process is somewhat flexible after all, these building owners may be less frightened of the process, but the big change is going to come from developers who see their opportunity to push for the de-listing of sites that have up to now appeared safe from development.

The official view is that 92% of presently listed buildings are still of listable quality, but that means that another 8% - nearly a thousand other buildings - will become potential development targets. If they had no merit, this would not be a worry, but often they have suffered from reversible alterations or additions and could easily be restored to contribute once more to their environment. It is true that not every de-listed building will disappear, but present development pressures are such that it is likely the majority will be demolished over the course

of a few years.

The Society has been disappointed not to receive regular notification of delistings, and often we hear of them only when local councils are consulted about (and usually try to resist) proposed delistings. One of the first districts to be resurveyed was Larne, and despite the comparative dearth of listed structures in the area, it is set to lose even more. The most surprising de-listing was the cottage hospital known as Smiley Buildings. It appears that the justification for removal from the listing schedule was inappropriate accretions to the rear. Following the delisting there is nothing to prevent the building being lost altogether. This is also true of the de-listed classical former Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of 1832, which appeared in Buildings at Risk Volume 5.

The UAHS has also been lobbying for the listing of a number of buildings under threat that fulfil many of the criteria of age and architectural integrity that would enable them ultimately to be listed, but which are not currently being considered as the survey teams have not reached the area. In these cases there is urgency in considering the listing as they are under such threats as the promise of Replacement Dwelling grants being made to their owners. However it seems the EHS will no longer consider ad hoc listing; nor will it intervene if there is an outstanding planning application under consideration, although there appears to be no legal bar to such action. The buildings cannot be named here due to sensitivity to the owners, but if the EHS does not intervene we are likely to lose some very exceptional buildings, one of possibly late 17th century date.

I don't understand the reasoning behind delisting something historic, especially if it was thought good enough to list in the first place. (*Councillor Linda Cleland of Ards Borough Council, proposing the Council write to object to the de-listing of the Ulster Bank in Frances Street and the Ulster Printworks Factory, Newtownards, Spectator 30 Sep 1999*)

The Council had written to the Environment and Heritage Service in June to notify it of its opposition and to ask why delisting [of the Ballyholme Hotel, Bangor] was being considered, but [apparently] had never received a reply. The building was delisted at the end of August. [One councillor said he was] angered at learning some of the building's features had changed since it was listed in 1975 - its sash windows had been removed and replaced with modern windows. When he had contacted the Planning Service... he was amazed at its comment that it was difficult to ask an owner to restore original features when it had no record of what those features were in the first place. His concerns were echoed by [other councillors] who feared the owners of other historic buildings would let them fall into ruin if they thought it would lead to delisting and lucrative development. (*Spectator 21 Oct 1999*)

THE VAT PACK

The 17.5% VAT levied on repairs to buildings, whilst new build is zero rated, has been a cause of concern and anger for many years. It seems grotesquely unfair that developers can build unhampered by VAT considerations, whilst restorers who are complying with stated governmental policies of sustainability and conservation have to pay the tax which is very often a deterrent to all but the most dedicated potential restorers.

The Joint Committee of National Amenity Societies has been lobbying the Treasury for some years in an attempt to change the current legislation. The long held view of the Treasury had been that no change could be made, but in recent discussion it was admitted that HM Customs & Excise had no relevant statistics that would make informed debate possible. The JCNAS rose to the challenge and asked conservation bodies to undertake a survey of work carried out on listed properties throughout 1998. The UAHS was one of the bodies that contributed to the survey by sending out questionnaires to conservation architects within Northern Ireland.

From the survey results global estimates were extrapolated and the results as published in the JCNAS report *VAT & the Built Heritage* make very sobering reading:

The total value of building repair carried out on listed buildings during 1998 was estimated to be £5,900 million and VAT on this work is estimated to have cost the heritage sector a further £195 million. Work on the built heritage represents a relatively small part of the UK construction industry as a whole, which was worth a total of £62,060 million in 1998.

It was also found that the imposition of VAT is not uniform:

Cathedrals are often VAT registered [and hence can reclaim VAT] and pay VAT on average of 8.7% on repairs, while churches and chapels are unlikely to be registered and pay an average of 14.7%. Likewise owners of large private houses open to the public are likely to be VAT registered, whereas owners of smaller listed buildings are unlikely to be registered.

The Joint Committee now intends to lobby vigorously for a single harmonised rate of 5% which would apply to all building work regardless of its nature. The UAHS supports and endorses this proposal as it could lead to an upsurge in restoration work, with much more incentive to carry out positive work.

It is still true, or certainly was true last year, that more money went to the Treasury by way of VAT [on repairs to churches] than went to the churches by way of grants. (*Sir Patrick Cormack FSA MP*)

AREAS OF TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER

In the present property boom the pressure for apartment and townhouse development is ever increasing, and it is not the only central urban area that is experiencing the surge. Good Victorian and Edwardian houses in the Areas of Townscape Character (ATCs) that were identified some ten years ago are being destroyed and replaced by large apartment blocks that swallow up the mature gardens. Developers are arguing that this is “brownfield development” in accordance with government policy because it is not on agricultural land, but we believe this is a deliberate misinterpretation of the concept and that brownfield should mean derelict land, not ground occupied by desirable and viable residences. It is apparent to the UAHS that the “character” of the areas of townscape character is to a large extent defined by the age and patina of the buildings - a factor not identified in the ATC policies, which concentrate on physical features like the generous plots and substantial buildings. Dwellings within ATCs do not currently enjoy statutory protection against demolition, and development control planners need to be much more proactive in encouraging their retention of buildings.

Established leafy neighbourhoods are very attractive to developers, so we are witnessing intense development in areas such as South Belfast and in the tranquil havens tucked away to the North and East of the city. Applications involving the loss of good buildings in Myrtlefield, Windsor and Wellington Parks, amongst others, are currently under consideration, and the Society has objected to a considerable number during the year. Often the only reference made to the historic detailing which characterises the area is the specification of “heritage style” brick, which mocks the quality of detailing of the original 19th century and early 20th century buildings.

The Society has expressed its concerns about ATCs to the Planning Service and the local councils. We have used television, radio and newspaper media to communicate the message, and have assisted in the preparation of a UTV studio debate on the subject which is to be shown in March 2000.

Although the Society is concerned primarily with listed buildings and conservation areas, the steady loss of buildings that fall just outside these categories is now a major concern. See also Knockdene, Marlborough Park, Somerton Road and North Down (pages 24-25 and 28)..

Historic sites shouldn't be used as development potential. An historical house is a finite resource and once you've lost its integrity, you've lost it forever. (Richard Holder, case officer at the Victorian Society, on English Heritage report “Enabling Development and the Conservation of Heritage Assets” opposing most enabling development.)

SUPERSTORES

The entangled nature of the local planning process was underlined in a recent case concerning out-of-town shopping centres, which are usually dealt with as Article 31 public inquiries (that is, major applications) under the **1991 Planning Order**. In the course of these enquiries, the procedure is rather different and the DoE planners appear as witnesses at the hearing, but after the PAC has made its report the DoE reverts to its usual role as judge in deciding whether to allow the application or not.

Two recent applications were made for superstores on the Holywood edge of Belfast: that for a Sainsbury complex at Tillysburn, known as D5, was approved by DoE but challenged by the Belfast City Council and Chamber of Trade and Commerce. In the course of the hearing it became apparent that the Planning Service had been in receipt of papers that should have led it and the PAC to refuse the application, and the judge quashed the planning approval. The same documents should have affected the approval of the Tesco store at Knocknagoney, which was in many ways similar, and not surprisingly, the D5 applicants took a judicial review of the latter approval.

It appeared likely that this too would be overturned, but construction was already well advanced following the approval at the end of 1998, and in the end the judge came up with a very worrying decision. Mr Justice Kerr dismissed the application for a judicial review of the decision to grant planning permission to Tesco. He said he was exercising his discretion because of the imminence of the opening and the £13 million expense already incurred by Tesco. Reasonable as this may sound, it implies that if a developer puts enough investment into his scheme quickly enough he will be able to avoid any review of his approval. Review of planning decisions is unusual, but for the final decision to be made on the grounds of efficacy rather than good planning is very worrying.

Planning reforms shouldn't just be about speeding up decisions for business. First and foremost, planning should be about involving people and improving the quality of life. (*Council for Protection of Rural England report Planning for People, October 1999*).

In most of London, windows that aren't wooden look dreadful. uPVC windows make a house much harder to sell. People take one look and work out how much it would cost to replace them with wood. (*Mark O'Neill of estate agent Foxtons in Fulham, Sunday Times 10 Oct 99*)

PLANNING CASES

Jennymount Mill

Most of you will know Jennymount Mill - it is a spectacular group of buildings you pass as you head north out of Belfast along the M2 - the seven-storey red brick block by Lanyon, the long roof ridge of the four-storey spinning mill, and one of the most exciting and beautiful factory chimneys in Ulster.

A phone call to the office one Friday afternoon in late November informed us that demolition was under way at the mill, and that destruction of the four-storey mill was imminent, probably during the next week. We were not able to contact the owner immediately to establish the extent of demolition proposed, but confirmed that work was under way, and such was public concern that both UTV and the BBC filmed the buildings over the weekend.

Jennymount Mill is important for a variety of reasons. The earliest buildings on the site date from 1856, but in 1864 the offices, engine house and chimney were constructed with John Lanyon as architect. They are adorned with carved heads of Wordsworth, Galileo and others from the workshop of the Fitzpatrick stone carvers - similar heads are to be seen on Yorkshire House, Donegall Square. The classically proportioned spinning mill runs parallel to the railway, but the most impressive building on the site is the Italianate palazzo building of 1891 also by Lanyon (*see front cover*).

This part of north Belfast once housed both the extensive York Street mill complex (now demolished and replaced by Yorkgate), the Milewater Mill (now the site of Thomson's feed mill) and the Jennymount Mill. Indeed Jennymount is important because it is one of the most intact mills remaining within greater Belfast. The current owner of the large site has made many attempts to find tenants for the buildings, but has had a very frustrating time. He has been successful in getting an Urban Development Grant for the refurbishment of the seven-storey Lanyon building. Ironically it was the plan to restore this building that triggered demolition of the four-storey block.

The UAHS invited the Director of the UK-wide organisation Regeneration through Heritage to come over and join in the discussion to ensure that the mill will be retained. Letters were sent to both the Minister for the Environment, Mr Sam Foster, and Mr Nigel Dodds, Minister for Social Development, to ask for intervention.

Although the problem has not yet been fully solved the UAHS has been instrumental in bringing various sides together to look at positive new uses for the buildings, and we hope to see Jennymount as the flagship site for the future regeneration of this part of North Belfast.

To Park or Not to Park

There was widespread alarm when bulldozers appeared on the front lawn of the Lanyon building at Queen's University last autumn and proceeded to rip up the grass. The Society had commented on the proposals lodged for planning (which had not been approved when work started), and had objected strongly to the inclusion of car parking spaces in front of the Old Library. Common sense prevailed however, and the parking was dropped from the revised plans. However the new wall in front of the Whitla Hall is intrusive, and it remains to be seen how the tricky problem of relating the formal new finishes with the warm brick and honey-coloured stone at the entrance of the Lanyon building is going to be resolved. The ugly temporary disabled access ramp still remains in position.

Prof Bain, the Vice-Chancellor, is to be congratulated on ambitious plans to restore the Great Hall next year, and we look forward to commenting on the ambitious "Lanyon 2" proposals for the townscape around the University which should be unveiled in 2000.

North Street under threat

Whatever one's views on the success of Castlecourt shopping centre, it can be argued that one Castlecourt is enough of a good thing. The Society is concerned by plans for another massive redevelopment plan for North Street and Rosemary Street, including a 15-storey hotel to be built on Royal Avenue, which would wipe out the old street grain of an historic area of the city and indeed lead to the destruction of many long-established businesses in favour of yet more multi-nationals.

The developers have already bought up most of the properties in North Street and are understood to have reached agreement to buy the Masonic Hall in Rosemary Street. The historic Rosemary Street Church is likely to be left isolated by the development if it goes ahead, and the Art Deco North Street Arcade would almost certainly be flattened. The old adage that redevelopment will lead to the creation of hundreds of jobs is being recognised by many people this time as a fallacy, or at least an economy with truth, since a more or less similar number of existing jobs and businesses will be displaced or put out of business by the new development. The net economic gain will be modest, and the environmental loss almost certainly considerable.

The £250m North Street proposal by the Gateway Partnership (Dunloe Ewart plc, MEPC plc and John Laing Property) is only one of three rival plans seeking the support of the Belfast Regeneration Office. The others are for a development at Victoria Square (which would probably include the demolition of the Kitchen Bar) and one at King Street and College Street which would appear to be less damaging to the historic environment, but no details of it have been published.

85 Botanic Avenue

The demolition without consent of the late Victorian building at 85 Botanic Avenue during a weekend in July 1999 was a particularly painful loss. The three-storey red brick building on a prominent corner site in Botanic Avenue acted as a book-end to an excellent listed terrace in tranquil Mount Charles. The Queen's Conservation Area boundary had been extended to incorporate this elegant building, which had gabled roofs, corbelled brickwork, cast iron rainwater goods, an oriel window on the Mount Charles elevation, and sliding sash windows throughout. A dressed sandstone



surround to the front door and Corinthian colonettes acted as the decorative focal point of the building. The owner has decided to appeal the decision (made subsequent to the actual demolition) to refuse consent for demolition and also to appeal refusal of a proposed inappropriate new building.

While this unauthorised case prompted outcry and media attention, we are very worried about the ease with which the Planning Service approves demolition within conservation areas. As more precedents are set, the rate of such decisions will inevitably increase, since planners will argue that refusal cannot be satisfactorily defended at appeal when similar cases have been allowed in the past.

Solid buildings of merit in Chester Avenue and Marine Parade within the Whitehead Conservation Area received permission for demolition, and the National Trust and UAHS have objected strongly to proposed demolition in the Cushendun Conservation Area. In Belfast a late Victorian warehouse in Bedford Street has been approved for demolition.

At present there is no standard procedure whereby conservation officers or development control planners assess the viability of restoration using expert advice from structural engineers and architects with training in conservation techniques. This would be a sensible procedure to introduce as soon as possible. Another one for the Assembly wish list!

Knockdene

39/41 Knockdene Park South (*see last issue*) was demolished on Easter Sunday after the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) upheld its earlier judgement, which had been overthrown by judicial review, that redevelopment of the site should be allowed. Although no.39/4 was not a listed building, the case was significant for the debate it engendered about the standing of ATCs (Areas of Townscape Character).

In the original planning appeal the Commissioner discerned “a hierarchy of protection” from listed buildings through conservation areas to ATCs, and tried to define how much protection was required in each case. In conservation areas, the legislation refers to “the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance”, whereas in ATCs the policies merely require developers to show that their proposal “respects the existing character and enhances environmental quality”. Even this would suggest that if a development was going to be worse, or less appropriate, than an existing building, it should be turned down.

One of the Society’s main arguments at the original appeal was that an ATC would not have been designated if an area had merely consisted of modern buildings of the same general character and plot size, and that the age and patina of the old buildings was an essential component of the ATC, which would be eroded by new development.

The Commissioner largely accepted this argument and turned down the application, but unfortunately his colleagues on the PAC did not accept his report, and they amplified their reasons in the second report issued in March 1999 which signed the death warrant for the buildings on the site. Recent case law in England, they argued, has undermined the strength of conservation area protection (the South Lakeland decision in 1992 established that even in conservation areas only “an absence of harm” had to be established), and they do not believe that a higher test should be applied in ATCs, particularly when the Department’s own guidance notes for ATCs do not express an objection in principle to apartment development.

The PAC blithely said that they would consider further applications for apartments in the ATC “on their own merits” and did not consider that this approval set any precedent. However a blind man on a galloping horse can see that the Knockdene area, hitherto almost uniformly late Victorian and Edwardian in character, has now been breached, and that any other large houses coming on the market will be targets for developers. When each of the new apartments is being marketed at virtually the cost of a whole house and there will now be fourteen apartments where there were originally two houses, what chance is there that this ATC (or any other) will retain more than a vestige of its historic character in ten years’ time?

Marlborough Park

Marlborough Park (in the Malone ATC) has suffered along with the rest of the Malone area in recent years from a spate of apartment building. No.48 Marlborough Park South was demolished some years ago and developed in apartments, and it appeared to form a precedent for the development of no.50, but for once the developer's appeal against refusal of planning permission failed, despite a favourable report by the Commissioner hearing the appeal.

At first sight this appeared to indicate that the tide of apartment building was about to be stemmed, but a close reading of the PAC's report dampened any such enthusiasm. It found that "apartment development is residential in nature and in this respect the proposal is not therefore inimical to the identified character of Malone ATC" - since the ATC does not define age or patina amongst the area's attributes. The reasons for refusal are in fact pretty marginal (the density was 69.7 units per hectare, and the building was too close to the boundary at 9m, but a density of 66.7 units would have been acceptable), and the Commission found the proposal was "generally in line with Government policies for sustainable development". No doubt a revised application will be successful, and another nail will be driven into the Victorian character of Malone.

106 Somerton Road

This house, situated within the Somerton Road Area of Townscape Character in North Belfast, is under threat from a current application to convert it into flats and intensively develop its fine grounds. A large number of trees have already been felled.

Not only is it one of the most attractive dwellings in the area, it also has a most interesting story to tell, which was brought to light by some investigative work by a member of the Society who grew up in the house. The two-storey finely decorated red brick dwelling named Lynton was built around 1904 by the shipbuilder George Clark as a wedding present for his daughter. Workman Clark & Co was the major Belfast ship-building concern in competition with Harland and Wolff. The house was built using girder construction, and interior features were fashioned from superior woods brought back from around the world. Lynton symbolises Belfast in its industrial heyday and should be retained as a valuable link with the city's maritime heritage.



Tedfords

The successful conversion of the old ships' chandlers, Tedfords, on Donegall Quay, Belfast, into a seafood restaurant has given a new lease of life to the old building. It was sad to see the nautical connection largely severed, but the sailmaking sheds alongside remained in their original use. Their future appears to be under threat now, and we understand the building has been sold although the sailmakers remain in residence for the time being. The Society does not usually concern itself greatly with the use to which a building is put, but in this case it is hard to see how its character (which is more social and historical than architectural) will be retained by any new commercial owner, and it has supported the sailmakers in their campaign to retain the building.

YMCA Building

Another case where the integrity of buildings can be put at risk due to changes of use is the YMCA building on the Albertbridge Road and Templemore Avenue. Dating from 1903, this striking Queen Anne Revival three-storey brick building with prominent recessed oriel windows, brick specials and ornate sandstone carving, is one of the most impressive pieces of architecture in the area. The building is currently used as a centre for performing arts which is under threat if the sale goes ahead. The Society is concerned that an inappropriate use for the building would require its special interior to be destroyed, and it is difficult to see another use that would better complement the building than the present one.

Riddell Hall

An application for fourteen townhouses in the grounds of Riddell Hall has been approved, bringing to a conclusion a long-running saga of applications for parts of the grounds of the building. This means that the setting of W H Lynn's last building is to be compromised, and perhaps more importantly, it will lose land that could provide car parking for any future, more commercial, use of the building itself.

Danesfort

Danesfort has been described as "one of the finest High Victorian mansions in Ireland". Despite the indubitable importance of this eclectic dwelling, which was originally known as Clanwilliam House, dense development in the grounds has been permitted and is now under way. This will lead to it being further obscured from the Malone Road approach and contravenes the clear policy guidance on the settings of listed buildings. Further retail proposals for the grounds are likely to be the subject of a Public Inquiry.

Bass Packaging

This 1940s building by Samuel Stevenson was featured in BAR6 and has since been demolished to make way for yet more apartments in the Linen Conservation Area. This was one of the few examples of International Style architecture in Belfast. The Art Deco interior features were of exceptional quality - the foyer alone was furnished with maple flooring, a pair of matching chairs, sideboard and a clock with brass details, which echoed the fine workmanship on the half moon brass plates supporting door handles. The building could easily have been re-used, as evidenced by the plans devised for the building by a firm of architects before the building was sold on.

Sirocco Works

The Sirocco Works is an engineering factory located on a site which has strong historical links with the height of Belfast's industrial prowess. - Samuel Davidson's Sirocco works started by producing fans for drying tea that were exported across the Empire, but was soon producing fans used in all the world's navies (both British and German warships during World War I used Sirocco fans!). In the 1770s Benjamin Edwards' Glassworks and Foundry had been located here, and limeworks, salt works, vitriol works and ropewalks followed.

The site was purchased by developers Dunloe Ewart, and the Society is concerned in particular that Sirocco's red brick waterside building with distinctive lettering on the gable end will be lost, as it is one of the few landmark buildings in this part of East Belfast.



Ardmara, on Bangor's Clifton Road, being demolished in February 1999 (see p.29)

NORTH DOWN AND THE DEVELOPERS

During the last year or two North Down, and Bangor in particular, seems to have caught a severe case of developer-itis. No sooner is a moderately large patch of back garden spotted or a large house with any surrounding land put on the market than the disease strikes. In some instances, not unlike the law of the jungle where the older members of the community are isolated and killed off, houses in need of nothing but loving care are sacrificed at the "altar of improvement".

Among the deceased are Ardmara (see pp 27 and 29) on the Clifton Road. Its owner may have acted within the law but certainly with no sense of history, or architectural quality, or sense of place, or of respect for the neighbourhood. Having destroyed two perfectly sound dwellings valued at approximately £600,000, he submitted a planning application for an apartment block containing sixteen units quite out of character with the surrounding houses.

The disease is catching, for now there are rumours that substantial offers have been made for the adjacent Royal Ulster Yacht Club site. The fact that the Club is listed at present will provide some measure of protection for it. We assume.

Just across the street stand Eastroyd and Westroyd, a fine pair of attached dwellings called the Ward Villas and dated 1851. Another planning application was submitted for their demolition and replication, theoretically with an identical facade, but greatly extended by long wings to either side and with the coach houses also converted, to accommodate thirty-six residential units in place of the existing two. Despite their importance in the development of Bangor these houses are unlisted, and it remains to be seen what protection will be given by the ATC brought in last autumn.

Is there a possibility that an element of personal financial gain might be common among these proposals? Why does one knock down good houses that have served and are still serving society simply to put up replacement units of dubious quality and durability each of which is likely to be priced way above what many locals might afford?

Planning permission was granted in September for the demolition of 1-3 Pickie Terrace, a highly distinctive building overlooking the Marine Esplanade in Bangor, which is to be replaced by a block of eight apartments. Also under threat is the Ballyholme Hotel, once used by Dr Connolly's Intermediate School and more recently as a nursing home. The application to delist the building was approved, theoretically so that better disabled access could be provided, but no sooner was the building delisted than it was put on the market for development at a cost of slightly under £1 million. Rumours abound about which large property might succumb next.

Ardmara

People sometimes ask how you can tell whether a building is at risk. Ardmara was not listed, but it was a pair of substantial bow-fronted mid-Victorian semi-villas in good condition and in a good location in Bangor's Clifton area overlooking Belfast Lough. It was a very desirable property, and although one side was on the market at the end of 1998 there was no reason to suppose it was at risk. Yet within two weeks of the family moving out, it was demolished in the early hours of a Saturday morning last February.

The demolition did not come entirely without warning, and local residents had been leading a vigorous campaign to have the building listed and to ensure that it was not lost, but, as one councillor said, "it shows what a few can do to the many". One half of the house was owned (and had been lived in) by the developer, who bought the other half when it came on the market. The vendor tried to withdraw from the sale when she found that demolition was the likely outcome, but unfortunately the legal process had gone through while she was under the impression that the house would be converted to flats rather than be demolished.

Demolition is rapid and easy, and unless a building is listed or in a conservation area, it is perfectly legal. Saving an old building at risk is hard work and very precarious. Putting a good new building up in place of a good old one is unusual and requires a sympathetic client and an imaginative architect. Despite the many merits of Ardmara, which was one of the earliest buildings in Bangor, Environment and Heritage Service said it would not have merited listing. If that is the case, the Society believes that the listing criteria need to be broadened to protect buildings of this quality which have very considerable local importance.

It is very sad to be leaving it but to hear that it may be demolished is heart-breaking (*Julia Sloane, the former owner of one half of Ardmara, December 1998*).

Until three weeks ago I lived in Ardmara and loved that house more than many people love a person. It was a beautiful big house and it was my home. (*Holly Sloane, letter to Co Down Spectator, February 1999*)

Vandals who demolish telephone kiosks get jailed. Vandals who demolish historic buildings get rich. (*Alderman Brian Wilson after the demolition of Ardmara, February 1999*)

Clearance took place early on a Saturday morning "to minimise inconvenience to local residents" (*KC Concrete, developers of Ardmara*)

He can knock a building down during the hours of darkness and make as much noise as he wishes. I can get fined for letting my dog bark after dark. (*Letter to Spectator, February 1999*)



Willesden in 1981 (Tony Merrick)

Willesden

Willesden, 75 Church Road, Holywood, was demolished in December 1999 shortly before it could be listed as requested by North Down Borough Council. Built by John Neill, a well-known jeweller and uncle of the clockmaker Sharman D Neill, it was for many years the home of the Finlay family, leading soap manufacturers in Belfast. One of their members was a keen mathematician who made a large double cube of stone for the garden carved with mathematical formulae. During the 1980s and 1990s it was sympathetically extended to become a nursing home. An outline planning application still under consideration proposes its replacement with apartments, but the owners obviously considered it prudent to demolish while the going was good.

Portrush Town Hall

We were greatly relieved when this Victorian gem caught the eye of Lord Dubs and was rescued from demolition in one of his final decisions as Environment Minister. Following consistent pressure from local people, the Society and the Historic Buildings Council, Listed Building Consent to demolish was refused in November 1999. The Society hopes to discuss the matter further with Coleraine Borough Council, who made the application for demolition, in order to explore the ways in which it can now be restored. (This turreted Lanyon Lynn & Lanyon polychrome brickwork beauty of 1872 graced the cover of the last edition of *Heritage Review*.)

Dundrum Harbour

The OS Memoirs remark on the interesting scenery around Dundrum with the “fine old ruins of Dundrum Castle, the harbour, with the majestic Mourne Mountains in the distance, forming a pleasant and picturesque view”. Permission has unfortunately been given for apartments along Dundrum harbour front. While there was a reduction in number of units originally proposed, better pedestrian access and the retention of the Oyster Bay Fishery, this four-storey development is inappropriate for the sensitive site within the Mournes Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The opportunity to create an interesting, small-scale, mixed-use sustainable development using the existing stone buildings has been lost.

Favour Royal, Augher

The Society has objected strongly to the plans for a hotel, conference centre, golf course and pavilion in the grounds of this listed 19th century Elizabethan manorial residence by John Hargrave. The grounds are included in the Register of Historic Gardens and Demesnes, and this will be the first test case to establish the strength of the designation. Approval of the plans would completely contravene the policies enshrined within PPS6 relating to additions to listed buildings and their settings.

Portstewart Town Hall

Coleraine Borough Council is also in possession of an unusual 1930s hall in Portstewart. Its listing description notes that “contemporary opinion ranked this building with the best small town halls in the United Kingdom”. It is a fine example of inter-war architecture, but despite the dearth of buildings of this ilk, the Council is considering demolition in order to provide a purpose-built facility.



Clough House

Clough House was a fine example of a modest 19th century gentleman's residence in the heart of the Co Down village of Clough. The building was listed, but the owner claims that he had not received notice of the designation and demolished it without consent in April 1998. Legal proceedings are ongoing.

HEARTH

Hearth is the housing association managed jointly by the UAHS and the National Trust to provide a mechanism for rescuing historic buildings in the province which are at risk of demolition or dereliction.

During 1998 and 1999 Hearth restored a terrace of houses at 8-11 College Square North, which were formally opened by Dame Jennifer Jenkins in November. This is an important group of buildings alongside, and contemporary with, the Old Museum, and representing the best (with the possible exception of our President's former offices in Chichester Street) surviving late Georgian houses in Belfast. This was a very desirable location overlooking the lawns of "Inst", and its early inhabitants included the wealthy baker and philanthropist Barney Hughes, Sir William Whitla, Professor of Materia Medica at what was to become Queen's University, and one of the city's Lord Mayors. The houses are built of brick four stories high, and have broad staircases and high ceilings.

Originally brick-faced, they were gradually plastered to achieve the then-fashionable stucco appearance, although the houses were not uniformly altered and Hearth's committee discussed the aesthetics of the restoration at some length. Sadly the houses had been severely vandalised following the decline of College Square North through the Troubles, and much of Hearth's work involved replacement of missing (stolen!) floors, doors, windows, architraves and plasterwork. No.8 College Square North was actually demolished after a bomb, and the remaining buildings had been gradually vacated and vandalised. At the time Hearth acquired nos.8-11 (from various owners) they had been stripped of all their interior architectural details, but no.12 remained in poor but complete condition. Unfortunately it was not possible to acquire it and it too was later vandalised, but sufficient moulds and joinery details had been taken from it to allow accurate restoration of nos.8-11.



The houses have been converted into flats, sixteen in all, retaining the generously proportioned staircases and front rooms to the ground and first floor flats. The very high ceilings of the lower floors (nearly 4m high) have allowed the insertion of a mezzanine floor at the back to improve the layout of the flats, but otherwise the interiors have been

fully restored, along with the front porches and new railings based on Victorian photographs of the houses. The splendidly light rooms at the front of the house give an indication of the prestige and wealth of the original inhabitants.

Normally Hearth eschews architectural salvage on the grounds that it encourages theft from the very buildings it is trying to restore; however an exception was made in this case. The acquisition of the gap site of no.8 and the decision to reconstruct it to complete the terrace opened up the possibility of incorporating a fine cast iron balcony which Sir Charles Brett had been given by James Fitzpatrick when his offices at no.1 College Square North



were bombed, and subsequently demolished for road widening, in the 1970s. No.8 did not originally have a balcony, but the replacement building is of course not listed, and it was exciting to bring the balcony back just about as close to its original home as could have been managed. The new house also has an internal fanlight of about 1790 salvaged by Sir Charles from Arthur Place and thought to have belonged to the house occupied by an early Belfast architect. The house was later occupied by the fiercely political solicitor John Rea, whose windows were regularly smashed by mobs opposed to his (very various and fluctuating) views. As a result, the panes of the fanlight are not the usual clear, but mostly red and blue as glass came to Mr Rea's hand.

The restoration contract was for about £1m, making it Hearth's single most expensive project, and the spacious flats that have resulted are let as social housing thanks to housing association grant and a matching grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Sadly, Hearth was not able to acquire the end house in the terrace, no.12, which came on the market shortly after Hearth completed the remainder of the houses, and fetched a very handsome sum. Hearth's committee reflected ruefully that if it hadn't been for the work it had carried out on the rest of the terrace, it might have been able to afford this house too!

During the year Hearth also worked as architects on the first project in Northern Ireland by the Irish Landmark Trust. This new organisation is based on the Landmark Trust that operates in England, and intends to build up a portfolio of interesting buildings around Ireland restored



Ballealy Cottage

for use as holiday cottages. Ballealy Cottage was formerly a gamekeeper's house on the Shanes Castle estate near Randalstown, and had lain largely neglected for twenty years or more. It is a stone-built cottage ornée with elaborately carved bargeboards and tall chimneys, and most of its original features had survived intact, albeit in poor repair. Hearth drew it to the attention of the ILT as it appeared to be ideally suited to their operation, they were able to negotiate a suitable lease and grant aid, and it has now been restored and hosted its first visitors.

Every five years, Hearth produces a sort of quinquennial report in the form of a brochure illustrating its projects to date, and the 1999 report (with a splendid watercolour by Robert McKinstry's son Jason on the cover) runs to 64 pages. Many favourable comments have been made on the achievements it records - one said that Hearth was "the proof that there need be no fundamental contradiction between preservation, re-use and economic viability", another that it is "a



wonderful record of high quality architecture, good environmentalism, and provision of social need". Hearth's work is scattered across the province and often deals with modest buildings, so that it is not highly visible - as another reader commented, "it is only when one sees it between two covers that one comprehends the incredible achievements of Hearth."

If you want to read about it for yourself, copies are available from Hearth at 66 Donegall Pass (tel 028 9053 0121) for £2 including p&p.

BOOK REVIEWS

Armagh

Buildings of Co Armagh, by C E B Brett, with photographs by Michael O'Connell; UAHS, Belfast 1999; 288pp, fully illustrated in black and white and with 16 colour plates, £28.00 hardback.

This volume is a treasure trove of the architectural riches of County Armagh, a county which, though well endowed with grand architecture, is particularly fecund in its range of smaller churches and chapels and middling-sized houses. Its main purpose, the author claims, is "filling the gaps", and "it represents a selective personal anthology which makes no attempt to pass itself off as an inventory". All the most significant buildings are included, however, and the entries ranging from prehistoric remains to contemporary building make up a comprehensive picture of the more interesting and important buildings within the boundaries of the old County Armagh. Thorough research into each building's history as well as the families and personalities associated with it give background and depth. As ever with Sir Charles, the tone is crisp and authoritative but behind the scholarship there lurks an impish relish for the absurd. The late Mr TGF Paterson, who lived at no.8 Russell Street, Armagh, "averred that he shared the premises with the ghost of an 18th century (or earlier) archbishop". Sir Charles suggests that "a blue plaque in memory of Mr Paterson, if not his companion, would not come amiss."

The pages abound with anecdote, fragments of verse and whimsical observation in addition to the detailed architectural and historical commentary. There are surrealistic moments too, as when he describes the "weightiest linen merchants in Ulster", including "an entire table" of his great uncles, wearing stiff collars and bowlers as they supped their soup. And again, at the Cardinal O Fiaich Library, Armagh, Sir Charles comments "the cardinal's name is incised to the left of the main door, but sideways as if he were standing on his ear; a posture not inconceivable for that endearingly unpompous Prince of the Church".

The photography of Michael O'Connell adds enormously to the appeal of the book; the colour plates are spectacular and the black and white illustrations are masterly in their selection of viewpoint and in the use of light to reveal the texture and form of the subject matter. In dedicating this volume to Hugh Dixon and Dick Oram, Sir Charles is not only paying tribute to their work in recording and preserving the built heritage of County Armagh, but also returning the compliment paid to him by Hugh Dixon whose *Introduction to Ulster Architecture* (UAHS 1975) was dedicated (in part) to him.

Sir Charles confesses to being a “romantically-minded viewer” and his taste runs from humble eccentricities to formal grandeur. His enthusiasm takes him from pre-history to industrial archaeology by way of tin-roofed cottages, winding bridges and canal buildings. His appetite for communicating his enjoyment recalls that other architectural enthusiast John Ruskin, who said of himself “there is a strong instinct in me... to draw and describe the things which I love.. a sort of instinct like eating and drinking.” The instinct seems to be very strong in Sir Charles too. If this be so, I wish him *bon appetit* and will also raise a glass to him in the hope that more counties are to follow.

David Evans

Bangor

Bangor: An Historical Gazetteer, by Marcus Patton. 2nd rev ed, UAHS, 1999; 216pp, illus, £9.00 paperback, £18.00 hardback.

It is a real pleasure to have a guided tour of a town with an expert who knows it well, who has a quick eye for detail and a sense of humour. Marcus Patton is just such a guide and Bangor is a town worthy of his interest and effort. The town has a great treasure chest of buildings in various styles. It may not have too many examples from early periods, but it makes up for it in the work of the last two centuries. Bangor did, however, have a monastery so famous for learning that it sent professors to Oxford to help set up their university.

The study of architecture can help in the study of history and there is much to be learned about the past from this book. The influence of the local families comes to light when the stories of the Castle and Clandeboye are recounted. Indeed in the book it is the houses that are the stars, not just the great houses but also more modest residences built by wealthy industrialists who found the location so suitable to their lifestyle. The gate lodges that are designed for these residences are proof of how well architects of worth can design small houses.

Other houses of more modest scale are also worthy of study. This especially applies to the fine terraces that form a backdrop to Bangor Bay. These are a vital part of the townscape and must be preserved. Sadly some have had inappropriate long dormers added, but one good sign is that the façade of Lorelei (p.117) is to be retained due to planning restrictions. Sadly Ardmara (p.52) was demolished in a dawn raid after the book went to press.

The book is packed with information both interesting and entertaining. There are anecdotes concerning the various clergy and their churches. Schools where hardly any teaching took place get a mention. Booze and Temperance are part of the architectural history. The reader will meet some very odd characters - a farmer, who, for

religious reasons, would not milk his cows on Sunday; a man who walked backwards in his bare feet, and a patron of the Tonic Cinema who sat in the front row eating a raw turnip. Marcus Patton is to be congratulated for producing such a fascinating book, and praise must also go to Peter O. Marlow for taking so many excellent photographs.

Brian Boyd

Stormont

Parliament Buildings, Stormont: the Building, its Setting, Uses and Restoration, 1922-1998; UAHS, Belfast 1999; 84pp, illus in colour and black and white, paperback, £8.00.

This is the latest title in the Society's *Ulster Buildings Series*. Previous titles have been private houses (Ballywalter and Clondeboye) and houses which had in their time seen a mixture of private and official usage (Malone House and Hillsborough Castle). Now it is the turn of an entirely official building, the controversial centrepiece of the Northern Ireland state.

Because the co-authors (understandably) walk on eggshells where the politics of Stormont are concerned, the text concentrates almost exclusively on fabric, architecture and the landscaping of the grounds. This is refreshing, and shows how interesting a well-illustrated before and after story of construction and re-construction can be made. Where private houses are concerned, far too much time is devoted (eg. in National Trust *Guides*) to family history and descriptions of contents, with consequent loss of emphasis on what is most important of all, the building history. To adapt the words of Miles Kington's famous spoof of a country house Guide: the sunken garden is of interest in its own right, and not just as the place where the third Earl went mad.

Two criticisms of the book ought to be made. First, it is needlessly weak on the historical context in which Stormont was built. Almost contemporaneously, an article by Alan Greer on "Sir James Craig and the Construction of Parliament Buildings at Stormont" was published in the 1999 issue of *Irish Historical Studies*. This explains Stormont in terms of symbolic statement and political theatre. The UAHS book does not draw upon it, nor on any of the biographies of Craig, one of which contains the interesting verdict that "his longest and most passionate letters to the Cabinet Secretariat related to the design of concrete fencing posts on the Stormont estate."

The second criticism is that the UAHS has not set its editorial stamp upon the book. The individual contributions of the five co-authors are not identified. Two of them are serving Civil Servants and two are members of one of the firms responsible for (and justly proud of) the restoration work necessitated by the 1995 fire at Stormont and preceding decades of neglect. This firm, and one other which was also

involved, have “underwritten” the cost of the book. The result is that the tone is set by the somewhat smug, anodyne and self-congratulatory foreword and three introductions provided by those responsible for the restoration. The UAHS is a ginger group characterised, at its best, by a spirit of inquiry and irreverence. It should surely be the editorial policy of the Society to see that this spirit animates all its publications?

A word might also be put in for the poor old Senate Chamber, described as “an ornate and beautiful space, if perhaps a little staid in character” (p.28). This space was undamaged, did not need to be restored and consequently features little in the book compared to the other two grand interiors, the Central Hall and, particularly, the Commons Chamber. The Senate Chamber never had a garishly bright ceiling; it has mellowed richly with time; and it comes close to genuine Neo-Classicism. When the dust has settled on the recent restoration, the Senate Chamber will perhaps be valued at its true worth.

None of these comments should be taken as detracting in any way from the painstaking excellence of the restoration. Not all members of the UAHS will rejoice at some details of modernisation which necessarily accompanied the restoration - the grotesque “uplighters” and the twee fabric on the walls of the Private Dining Room - or will apply the adjective “inspired” to the decision of “the Construction Service of [the] Department of the Environment Steering Group... [to organise] a gathering at the Slieve Donard Hotel of all those to be involved in the project” (p.52). But we can all applaud the overall results. Since the restoration was considerably complicated by an absence of building records, we can also applaud the way in which the new work has been documented. This book is an abbreviated, published summary of that documentation, and is warmly to be welcomed on that count alone. Moreover, because of its timing, it may perhaps change attitudes in a more general sense. For too long, Stormont has been taken for granted by the section of the community which was supposed to glory in it, and has been hated by the other section for non-architectural reasons. Perhaps we can now reach the consensus view that Northern Ireland was singularly fortunate in the high quality and imaginative siting of its most important public building.

Anthony Malcolmson

Bliss Or Blitz?

Bliss or Blitz? The Proceedings of a Conference on The Future of Rural Buildings in Ulster; UAHS, Belfast 1999, pp. 60. (The proceedings were printed primarily for conference delegates, and are now out of print).

The engaging title of this conference is attributable to Mr. Frank McDonald, environment correspondent of the Irish Times who, in a seminal series of articles published in 1987, highlighted the poor quality of much of the new build housing in the Irish countryside.

The topic has lost none of its importance in the intervening period and the conference offered the opportunity not only to present the results of recent research on the amount and distribution of the loss of traditional buildings in rural Northern Ireland but also to call for the establishment of an integrated cross agency policy for the protection and restoration of vernacular buildings.

The conference proceedings consist of synopses of no less than twelve presentations made on the day together with a resolution adopted by delegates which, in recognition of the international importance of the rural vernacular architecture of Ireland, called for supporting measures and resources to ensure its protection in keeping with the draft ICOMOS (the International Committee on Monuments and Sites) charter on the Built Environment Heritage. Four strands of activity were identified for particular attention namely (1) legislation, specifically in the areas of The Planning Order, the Housing Order and VAT measures. (2) Economic Issues, in particular the need for economic appraisals to take into account long term sustainability issues which take cognisance of the value to the economy of a vibrant and distinctive vernacular built heritage. (3) Traditional Skills, whose survival and promotion is a benefit to the overall economy as well as ensuring the sensitive repair of its buildings and (4) Education, with a call for programmes of education and information to be set up in schools and the broader community to raise awareness of the vernacular heritage.

The synopses of the conference papers are somewhat disappointing. The reader is left frustrated, being presented with some excellent points but shorn of their background rationale, and context and statistics are included without the necessary sources being cited, which drastically limits their usefulness. It would surely have been better to have produced a single long review article which brought together the main points of the papers and underlined the connections between the key issues. The “disembodied” nature of the synopses stand in marked contrast to the three full papers which are included as appendices to the proceedings. Caroline Maguire’s contribution on the changing vernacular landscape is “research rich” and brings home dramatically the extent of loss of vernacular buildings in the Northern Ireland rural landscape, while the paper by Salvatore Di Fazio on the Rural Architecture of Europe puts the Irish situation in context and outlines a large number of measures and policies to identify and protect the built environment heritage in rural areas. The paper by Susan Denyer, Historic Buildings Representative with the National Trust in the Lake District, is a fitting conclusion to the published proceedings since it focuses on good practice and the need for a partnership approach, harnessing conservation of the built environment with other rural economic and community development initiatives.

All in all the conference and the publication of its proceedings

provide a valuable contribution to the debate about the future of what is an increasingly contested Irish countryside, and for this the conference organisers are to be wholeheartedly congratulated. However, more than debate is called for. As Hugh Dixon, the last speaker at the conference, and an old friend of architectural conservation in the province, noted, perhaps too much time had been spent pointing out what was wrong with modern schemes and too little in offering more sympathetic solutions. Reconciliation between rural development and conservation interests is long overdue.

John Greer

EVENTS

The diversity of the Society's activities in 1999 was such that we started the year with a blaze of colour and concluded with an Oscar ceremony! Our thanks go to all those who organised individual events, the Society's Secretary, Joan Kinch, and the owners and custodians of the buildings we visited.

January is often a dismal month, so we were delighted to be able to welcome Professor Bernard O'Kane to brighten the gloom with a lecture on *Islamic Architecture - the Triumph of Colour*. Dr Michael Gould's lecture on *Water Towers of Britain and Ireland* gave a fascinating glimpse into an oft-ignored part of our industrial heritage.

The Society's visit to Bangor was under the expert guidance of Marcus Patton whose book on the town had just been published. Continuing on a theme of seaside resorts and a fascination with water which seemed to pervade UAHS activities during the year Primrose Wilson took a group to Malahide and North Dublin! There we met members of the Dublin Civic Group for a week-end of memorable buildings and general conviviality.

In June Michael Coulter led a visit to sites on the Ulster Canal and Shannon Erne waterway. There were interesting contrasts drawn between the two canals which provided food for thought and animated discussion which shortened the return journey. Douglas Black led another outing with a liquid theme - *Dips and Sips*. After a swim in, and a short discourse on, Templemore Baths, the group visited an unspecified number of historic pubs!

The Society's outing to Downpatrick included visits to Finnebrogue House, Inch Abbey and Ringdufferin House; and so managed to combine glimpses of the sea with a visit inland. In July members visited Patterson's Spade Mill, a fascinating piece of Ulster's industrial heritage owned by the National Trust, and afterwards visited Castle Upton in Templepatrick. Keith Gilmour led members on a tour of Omagh and

buildings in Co Tyrone in September. The visit to Omagh gave members the opportunity of learning how the reconstruction of the town will take place.

Much thought was given to the Society's final lecture of the 20th century. It was decided to invite the distinguished architectural historian, Dr Edward McParland, to outline his selection of the best buildings of the century. There was a palpable air of excitement as he strode, suitably attired, onto the stage in the Ulster Museum to begin the Oscar ceremony!

After an introduction which matched buildings to previous Oscar-winning films he turned to his nominations. We were impressed to discover that he had received hundreds of nominations for the different award categories! Dr McParland then outlined his shortlist from the nominations received and in time-honoured fashion the winner was announced with an envelope opening ceremony.

As we set off on our magical journey from best actor (Le Corbusier) to best supporting actor (Hector Guimard's Métro stations) we were transfixed by seeing familiar and unfamiliar buildings as star performers at an Oscar ceremony. Mies van der Rohe's Pavilion at the International Exhibition in Barcelona, Mackintosh's College of Art in Glasgow, I M Pei's Pyramid at the Louvre, Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, all received either a nomination or an Oscar. The suspense began to build up for the final award - Best Film (ie best building) - it went to Lutyens' masterpiece Lambay Castle on Lambay Island, Co Dublin.

The activities for the new millennium start with the first in a series of lectures on the world of conservation's triumphs and disasters entitled *Liquorice Allsorts*. The lectures will be held in the Carnegie Library, Donegall Road, Belfast, a building carefully restored by one of our members.



We always expect full participation in our events. On the Dips and Sips outing in June our Chairman (left) enjoyed a dip in the Templemore Baths, while Sinead O'Hara preferred a dry immersion!

MONEY MONEY MONEY

However filled with altruism and good intentions a prospective restoring owner may be, many excellent schemes founder due to lack of cash. Access to adequate information about appropriate finance is one of the most crucial parts of any conservation project, whatever its scale. The excellent Funding Directory produced by the Architectural Heritage Fund in England in 1998 threw down the gauntlet to the Environment & Heritage Service, when it said that Environment & Heritage Service had informed them that work on a directory for Northern Ireland was “under way”.

The UAHS was duly commissioned to produce a similar reference source, with support from the Environment & Heritage Service. *The Directory of Funds for Historic Buildings: Northern Ireland* was launched by Lord Dubs in October. The Directory aims to be as comprehensive as possible, but obviously government programmes change and it will need to be updated to reflect new funds as they come on-stream. European funding has given a major boost to building conservation in Northern Ireland, but many of these programmes ceased on 31 December 1999 and the new programmes will only be announced in the spring. The Directory, however, should be an essential reference tool to all potential building restorers as it covers many types of financial sources ranging from statutory bodies to charitable trusts. It is available free of charge if collected from the UAHS office, or £4 by post.

The fragility of our built heritage is demonstrated by these two photographs of the elegantly-named Airfield House on the Glen Road in Belfast, taken in April 1999 (left) and (right) some months later after a fire had gutted the building. Architectural features of the interior had been removed shortly before the fire, and an application has been made to develop the site.



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Society depends on an active membership for its effectiveness. Members can help its work in many ways - by monitoring planning applications, for example, or drawing attention to undesirable development. The Society organises regular outings, expeditions, lectures and social events. Members also enjoy the privilege of buying all the Society's publications at a 25% discount (see overleaf for a full list).

To:
The Secretary
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society
66 Donegall Pass
Belfast
BT7 1BU

Full name (s)

Address

.....

..... Post Code

Telephone:(home) (work).....

Area of particular interest or concern (if any)

.....

.....

Please indicate the type of membership applied for:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Annual Membership | £14 |
| Joint Annual Membership | £20 |
| Corporate Annual Membership | £45 |
| Student up to 25 years Annual Membership | £7 |

Members paying by direct debit will receive a £1 reduction in their subscription rate. Forms are available on request.

UAHS PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS, MONOGRAPHS AND ESSAYS

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| An Introduction to Modern Ulster | Roger Mulholland | £4.00 |
| Architecture | Architectural Schizophrenia | £4.00 |
| Fishmongers' Company in Ulster | Malone House | £4.00 |
| | The Workhouses of Ulster | £4.00 |
| Moneymore & Draperstown | Ballywalter Park | £4.00 |
| Irish Church Monuments | Hillsborough Castle | £4.50 |
| J J McCarthy and the Gothic Revival | Ulster Model Schools | £7.60 |
| in Ireland | Buildings of Co Antrim | £24.00 |
| Northern Gardens | Gate Lodges of Ulster | £13.95 |
| Diamond as Big as a Square | Stormont | £8.00 |
| Mausolea in Ulster | Buildings of Co Armagh | £28.00 |
| Classical Churches in Ulster | | |

LISTS AND GAZETTEERS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| Queen's area of Belfast | £4.00 | Mid Down | £4.00 |
| Banbridge | £4.00 | Donaghadee & Portpatrick | £4.00 |
| Town of Monaghan | £4.00 | Rathfriland & Hilltown | £4.00 |
| West Antrim | £4.00 | Malone & Stranmillis | £7.50 |
| Craigavon (Omnibus) | £4.00 | Buildings of Armagh | £6.50 |
| Joy Street area, Belfast | £4.00 | Central Belfast | £9.50 |
| St Helier, Jersey | £4.00 | Bangor (new edition) | £9.00 |

Orders for all the foregoing publications, and standing orders for future publications, may be sent to the Society at 66 Donegall Pass, Belfast BT7 1BU, and will be fulfilled subject to availability, and at the charges for postage and packing ruling at the date of order.

Many of the Society's early Lists are now out of print, and while we hope to bring out new editions of some them, the Secretary is happy to assist enquirers by making photocopies on request at cost from the copies held in the Society's office. The following items are now out of print:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Lisburn | Island of Rathlin |
| Portaferry and Strangford | Mourne |
| Antrim and Ballymena | North Derry |
| Downpatrick | Carrickfergus |
| City of Derry | Town of Cavan |
| Dungannon & Cookstown | An Introduction to Ulster |
| Glens of Antrim | Architecture |
| North Antrim | Palm House and Botanic Gardens, |
| Coleraine and Portstewart | Belfast |
| Enniskillen | Court Houses and Market Houses |
| East Down | Clandeboyne |

The Ulster Architectural Heritage Society exists to promote the appreciation and enjoyment of good architecture of all periods - from the prehistoric to the contemporary - in the nine counties of Ulster, to encourage the preservation and restoration of buildings of merit or importance; and to increase public awareness of the beauty, history and character of local neighbourhoods.



This newsletter outlines some of the major activities of the Society during 1999.

President:

Sir Charles Brett

Vice-Presidents:

Dr M J Craig

Mr J Cornforth

UAHS Committee for 1999-2000:

Peter O. Marlow (*Chairman*)

Sean Hagan (*Hon Secretary*)

Keith McCleane (*Hon Treasurer*)

Douglas Black

Brian Boyd

Lady Carswell

John Cowdy

Stephen Douglas

Lyn Gallagher

Helen Hossack

Karen Latimer

Brian McKee

Caroline Maguire

Annesley Malley

Rt Hon the Lord O'Neill

Marcus Patton

Terence Reeves-Smyth

Dawson Stelfox

Sally Visick

Secretary: Miss Joan Kinch

Buildings at Risk Officer: Mrs Harriet Devlin

Research Officer: Miss Rita Harkin

The Society is always looking for members interested in taking an active part in its activities. In particular, monitoring of planning applications in different areas, preparation of new lists, and assistance in organising outings are always appreciated. If you would like to help in any of these ways, please contact the Secretary, Miss Joan Kinch, at Belfast 550213. Our e-mail number is uahs@btinternet.com

Our **front cover** shows Jennymount Mill, Belfast. The **back cover** shows College Square North, Belfast, before and after restoration by Hearth.

Contributors to this issue: Brian Boyd, Lady Carswell, Harriet Devlin, David Evans, John Greer, Sean Hagan, Rita Harkin, Karen Latimer, Anthony Malcomson, Peter O. Marlow, Tony Merrick, Marcus Patton and Primrose Wilson.

