



# The Cave Hill Campaigner

Published by  
The Cave Hill  
Conservation  
Campaign  
Summer 2015  
No. 19

## School Project Vandalised on Cave Hill

Sometime between Friday 17 April and Saturday 18 April, someone brought a chisel and hammer up to our seat project below the caves on Cave Hill and proceeded to remove all 50 bronze plaques that were an integral part of the project.

This project was the work of children from Cavehill Primary and St Thérèse of Lisieux. Three years ago we commissioned an artist, Alan Cargo, who worked with the children to put the whole concept together. The pupils drew things they associated with Cave Hill – plants, animals, birds, rocks, monuments. Clay moulds were made of these drawings and then cast in bronze. These 3 x 3 inch plaques were attached to the tops and sides of four rough cylinders which acted as seats.

For the last three years these seats have been respected and enjoyed by many people. What sort of person deliberately destroys such a commemorative and useful work for the paltry scrap value of the bronze, around £7?

*Cormac Hamill*

*Cavehill seats before they were damaged.*



*Vandalised School Project*

### In This Issue:

School Project Vandalised on Cave Hill .....	1
The Year Just Past .....	2
Working Together .....	3
Ballyaghagan Souterrain .....	4
The 'more' of Cave Hill .....	5
Yeats at McArt's Fort .....	6
Roadway Free For All .....	7
Hands Across the Sea .....	7
Remembering Joe Nagle .....	8
New Hope for Old Venue .....	9
The Hills are still the Same .....	10
Wildflower Project .....	12
Hedge Laying in Carr's Glen .....	13
Looking Back .....	14
Guided Walks .....	16
Membership Form .....	16

The Cave Hill Campaigner is published by the  
Cave Hill Conservation Campaign  
c/o 32 Waterloo Park, Belfast, BT15 5HU.

Chair: Cormac Hamill  
Editor: Martin McDowell

Please visit our website at:  
[www.cavehillconservation.org](http://www.cavehillconservation.org)  
All correspondence welcome by email to:  
[info@cavehillconservation.org](mailto:info@cavehillconservation.org)



# The Year Just Past

The range and quality of our activities on Cave Hill are expanding year by year and 2014-2015 has been no exception.

We had an excellent range of nine Saturday walks including for the first time, two popular foraging walks and a bird-ringing experience. We advertised in *City Matters* and *What's On in Belfast* as well as in the Belfast Hills Partnership Annual Walks Programme. These resulted in improved turnouts of between fifteen and forty; our average attendance was about twenty.

We improved our public presence in other ways: we had a stall at the now-annual Council-run *Big Lunch* at the Castle on 1 June and at Cavehill Primary School's Summer Fair on 7 June. These resulted in a number of enquiries and new memberships. Our membership currently stands at around 100.

We have also affiliated this year for the first time with two organisations. Affiliation with *The Conservation Volunteers* allowed us access to public liability insurance at very favourable rates and affiliation with the *Federation of Ulster Local Studies* has allowed us to feature on a register of speakers which is circulated among historical groups across Northern Ireland.

As a result, I was invited to speak about Cave Hill at The Killultagh Local History Group in Crumlin in November last and at the White City Historical Association in March this year.

Our survey work continued. We were part of a survey of the skylark and meadow pipit population across the top of Cave Hill and, for the second year, we monitored butterflies on a transect which takes in the great limestone quarry, every week from April to September.

We combined with volunteers from the Ulster Bank and spent a day in June cleaning the old Bellevue steps. Our efforts can be viewed by anyone driving along the Antrim Road. We also were involved with Belfast Hills Partnership in cleaning cross-drains on paths and in repairing the hedge which runs along the lane up from Carr's Glen.

We protested to the Council about the highly inconvenient closure of the path from Hazelwood to the Caves. Unfortunately, it is hard to argue against Health & Safety regulations and the amount of money required to stabilise the slope where the landslips occurred is enormous. But we promised the Council

---

*An April Day.*

---



that we would return to this issue regularly in the future. We have a letter from the Parks and Leisure committee promising not to forget about this path; we will watch to see whether they fulfil this promise.

Our website and in particular our Facebook site are proving very useful ways of bringing issues to light and of recording interesting facts and photographs. Why don't you join us and see what is going on?

We have devoted considerable energies to revising our governing document. In common with all other charities in Northern Ireland, big or small, unrecognised or not, we expect to be called forward for a pretty rigorous inspection of our governance sometime in the near future. It has been a useful exercise and has resulted in a lot of changes and additions. This document was passed at our AGM in March. We now have sixteen governors; this means that some of the detail in the way we function will change. But we will still rely on the energy and commitment of our volunteers and the support of our members. I am very grateful to them.

I am also very grateful to Belfast City Council for their recognition of us as a 'Friends' organisation, for allowing us access to Castle facilities and for funding various aspects of our work. My thanks extend to the Belfast Hills Partnership for their interest in Cave Hill and the work they do on it.

*Cormac E. Hamill*

## Castle Locksmiths & D.I.Y. Emergency Lock Opening Service



359 - 365 Antrim Road  
Belfast  
BT15 3BG

**Tel / Fax:** (028) 9074 1418  
**After Hours:** 07802 739169  
**Email:** castlelocks@ntlworld.com

## Working Together

Elsewhere in this magazine our chairman refers to groups to which the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign are affiliated. Therefore, to follow on from this, I would like to inform readers of our recent link-up to a community based body called *The Belfast Metropolitan Residents Group*.

It has been my privilege in recent months to act as representative for the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign at meetings of the Metropolitan Group, which are held about every six weeks. The group has taken an active role in lobbying Ministers at Stormont on matters such as BMAP (Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement. Through my involvement with *The Belfast Metropolitan Residents Group* I have become more aware of forthcoming funding cuts to groups with similar concerns to ours, such as *Northern Ireland Environment Link*. The group also has an interest in built heritage such as Cave Hill's own Floral Hall. I would particularly like to thank the group for the warmth of their welcome when I joined last year. I feel working together will have benefits for both organisations.

The Cave Hill Campaigner has previously referred to the importance of planning issues including an article by our secretary Edward McCamley in our 2013 issue entitled 'A Not So Cunning Plan'. This can be found, along with all our other back issues on our website at: [www.cavehillconservation.org](http://www.cavehillconservation.org)

*Andrew Kerr*

## FORTWILLIAM GARDEN CENTRE

- Fresh Flowers •
- Fruit • Vegetables • Garden Sundries •
- Bouquets • Fruit Baskets •

575 ANTRIM ROAD  
TEL: 028 9077 1013



# Ballyaghagan Souterrain

This souterrain has only come to light in the last year. Robert Holmes of North Belfast found it as a teenager and now, twenty years later, he has brought it to our attention. I asked Robert for an article on his reaction to the souterrain. He has responded by creating a short film of the site accompanied by his own atmospheric music on this. Check out this link and enjoy!

<http://youtu.be/uK6oIwtgTyU>

Souterrains typically are hidden chambers used by residents of an area to hide goods (and even themselves) whenever they were threatened or, in some cases, for storage only. They date to the late iron age or early Christian era (500 – 1000 CE) though there is some reason to believe that Irish souterrains are a little later than this. They are also associated with early settlements and this particular example is not far from the cashel – the remains of a fortified farmhouse (8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century) beside the car park at the Hightown Road.

This souterrain has been incorporated into a field boundary in Ballyaghagan Nature Reserve on the back of Cave Hill. Whether this was by accident or design, this has ensured that the souterrain remains hidden, even from a close inspection.

It is a tunnel, carefully lined with stone and now about 2 metres long and about 60 cms broad and high. It has two entrances, both partially collapsed. There are signs, a metre or two away, that the souterrain may once have been more extensive.

This is the only souterrain known to me within the Cave Hill Country Park. There are two recorded

(in 1947 and 1959) outside the park on sites now built over with roads and housing and there are two still extant on Carnmoney Hill.

It has been reported to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and will be listed in due course.

The *Federation of Ulster Local Studies* have also recorded this find in their website “Hidden Gems and Forgotten People”:

<http://www.hidden-gems.eu/federations.html>

A brief general survey of Irish Souterrains and further references can be found in:

O’Sullivan & Downey. “Souterrains” *Archaeology Ireland* Vol 70 pp34-36 Winter 2004

*Cormac E Hamill*

*Inside the Souterrain:*



**MMMM... MURPHY BROWNS. GOOD, QUALITY GRUB AND GREAT SERVICE.**

> Specialists in outside catering  
> Open from 10am daily



**Murphy Browns**  
RESTAURANT

186 Cavehill Road Belfast, BT15 5EX.  
(028) 9039 1309 info@murphy-browns.co.uk  
www.murphy-browns.co.uk Visit us on Facebook



**fresh "gar bags"**

Specialists in:

• Incense • Perfumed Oils • Oil Burners • Tiger Balm •

Belfast's **ORIGINAL** Alternative Store  
for over 40 years!

*If its different...we've got it!*

24 Rosemary Street, Belfast

**Tel: 028 9024 2350**



# The 'more' of Cave Hill

*"Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God,  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;  
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries."*

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

Walking on the Cave Hill, it is easy to unplug from the hectic hurtling of the city below. The song of a solitary bird, carried towards me on a gentle breeze, a necklace of raindrops strung out along a leaf's edge, and the smell of new rain on dust-dry ground. I stop. I am stopped: so much before me and so much beyond me. I gaze at the raindrop and it gazes at me, both of us held in a web of wonder. I marvel at the 'more' of life, captivated by a creation threaded through with mystery, an existence afire with God.

The ancient Celts, who kept cattle in the Hill's *Devil's Punchbowl*, lived naturally with a sense of the *more* in life and in creation. Gods – the Celts had over 400 of them – lived in sacred lakes, rivers, forests and mountains. The Celtic notion of 'thin places', where the walls between heaven and earth are thin enough to allow both to touch, carried with it a belief that the beyond, the *more*, was in our midst. Celtic Christians continued that sense of awareness of the holy in the ordinary, the mystery of God's presence in creation.

Every act, every aspect of life, was imbued with sacred significance because it was threaded through with the presence of God.

Our modern world has us hurrying over tarmaced streets, fastened into moving boxes, our food carefully wrapped in plastic, most of us sealed just as carefully from the wild beauty and the mystery which so captivated the Celts. We cling-wrap and separate ourselves from nature, and from the *more* in our midst. We lose sight of something precious within; the sacredness of this moment, this now, escapes us as we speed along.

Centuries after the Celts, Cave Hill still provides an invitation to savour the sacred *more* within our reach. The invitation is extended to you. As you walk along the many beautiful paths weaving around the Hill, let yourself stop, *be stopped*, by something which invites your attention. On one walk, listen. On another, look ... touch ... notice the scents of the hill ... taste the air. Let the Hill reveal herself to you, in small and sacred moments. Take time to gaze at her wild expanses and at her quiet mysteries, hidden in hedgerows. Expect to be surprised. Take time to linger. Let what you gaze upon look also at you. Receive what it has to give. Creation is afire with God. You are on holy ground.

*Breige O'Hare*

---

*Be Still.*

---





## Yeats at McArt's Fort

This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Ireland's most celebrated poet, W.B. Yeats. It is a good moment to recall his ascent to McArt's Fort in September 1899.

Yeats had been heavily involved in plans to commemorate the centenary of the United Irish Rebellion of 1798, but had missed the northern commemorations, and notably the lighting of fiery beacons at McArt's Fort on New Year's Eve 1897 and in June 1898. He would however have been well aware of the significance of McArt's Fort in United Irish history.

Evidently he felt he had missed out on the earlier events and in September 1899 he and Maud Gonne McBride came north. They had originally intended to visit the Giant's Causeway, but the imperative of the climb to McArt's Fort took precedence.

No doubt they were encouraged by Anna Johnston, better known by her pen name of Ethna Carberry, and co-editor of the militantly separatist, *Shan Van Vocht*, which had done much to highlight the significance of

McArt's Fort in United Irish history.

Yeats and Maud Gonne stayed at the Johnston home, where they were certainly made welcome by Anna's father, Robert, who, although a wealthy timber merchant, was a veteran Fenian and one-time Ulster representative on the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. No doubt he regaled Yeats and Maud Gonne with reminiscences, but Yeats had little time for this – the old man was 'a bore'.

No matter the visiting couple duly made the ascent to McArt's Fort. Unfortunately Yeats did not record his own impressions, but he does tell us that Maud Gonne saw a vision of 'an old man with an open book, "the book of wisdom"... he was like a drawing of [William] Blake's *Urizen*'. Any connection here with the United Irishmen was oblique at best!

*John Gray*

---

*McArts Fort*

---

***The Master Butcher***  
*for Grade A Beef, Lamb, Pork & Poultry*



***Stanley's Family Butchers***

569 Antrim Road, Belfast

**Tel: 028 9077 4615**



**Cavehill**  
**Accountancy Services Ltd**  
**Chartered Accountants**

636 Antrim Road  
Phone: 028 9028 8635

Email: [peter@cavehillaccountancy.com](mailto:peter@cavehillaccountancy.com)  
Website: [www.cavehillaccountancy.com](http://www.cavehillaccountancy.com)



## Roadway Free For All

Those approaching Belfast on the M2 will have noticed the appearance last year of a new scar on the flanks of Collinward. It is clearly an access road of some sort and one crudely dug out with the help of a digger.

As the site of this development lies on the edge of a nature reserve and within an area of high scenic value, the Belfast Hills Partnership not unnaturally sought clarification from the Department of the Environment as to whether this was deemed 'a change of use of land', or whether there was 'any current planning application or consent for this.'

The answer was simple if bleak – 'the matter referred to is considered to be permitted development with[in] the context of [the] Planning (General Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 1993 as amended and as such does not require planning approval.'

The implications are clear. If you are a private landowner and most often a farmer, you can build a new road on your property anytime and anywhere, and no matter what fancy or cosmetic designations relating to environmental importance apply to the site involved or what archaeological remains your digger ploughs through.

*John Gray*

## Hands Across The Sea

I thought this article would be a good way of introducing readers to a similar group, based in Central Scotland who have much the same concerns as our own (biodiversity, local history etc). They are the 'Save Gillies Hill' Group based in the Stirling area, and were formed in 2007 in response to the renewed threat of quarrying, first carried out in the 1970's and continued until 1996. I have taken an active interest in their cause and have been in contact with their leader, Douglas Campbell. Coincidentally it emerged that Douglas spent several Summer holidays with family in the Cave Hill area during the 1950's and has fond memories of walks in the Castle grounds.

The above mention of quarrying provides a reason to reflect on our own Cave Hill Conservation Campaign. This began back in 1989, to counter the threat posed when an application was made by The Glenshesk Mineral Company, with a view to prospecting for a mineral called zeolite. And the threats to the wider Cave Hill area haven't stopped. The Cave Hill Conservation Campaign has recently been faced with three issues in particular - plans for an incinerator, the cutting of a road to allow access to a landfill site on the Hightown Road, and an 'Art Installation' proposal (on McArt's Fort). All three of those issues have been discussed at our Committee meetings over the past year, and I would maintain that each of them could be described as being inconsistent with the ideals of our Campaign. It shows there is always a need for continued vigilance.

To find out more about the threat to Gillies Hill go to [www.savegillieshill.org.uk](http://www.savegillieshill.org.uk) The site has an on-line petition that you may wish to sign. If anyone would prefer to sign a paper version of the petition they can contact me by email at:

[andrew.kerr60@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andrew.kerr60@hotmail.co.uk)

*Andrew Kerr*

**gapwines**

♦ Fine Wines, Speciality Beers & Spirits

LOG ON NOW TO  
[WWW.GAPWINES.COM](http://WWW.GAPWINES.COM)  
TO REGISTER FOR OUR NEWSLETTER  
AND DETAILS OF ALL OUR  
UPCOMING EVENTS & TASTINGS

FOLLOW US NOW  
ON FACEBOOK  
& TWITTER @GAPWINES



642 ANTRIM ROAD,  
BELFAST - 02890781453  
75A BELFAST ROAD,  
CARRICKFERGUS - 02893362734

EMAIL  
[PETER@GAPWINES.COM](mailto:PETER@GAPWINES.COM)  
[CONALL@GAPWINES.COM](mailto:CONALL@GAPWINES.COM)  
[DAVE@GAPWINES.COM](mailto:DAVE@GAPWINES.COM)



## Remembering Joe Nagle



*Joe Nagle*

Joe was a long standing, indeed founder member, of the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign and for many years served on its committee. I write as a friend of some fifteen or so years about the impressions he made and how he enriched my life.

When I connect Joe with the Cave Hill what always come to mind is days out on its slopes with spade in hand, doing his bit to improve our local environment. There was something poetical or archetypal, seeing a man made by his rural Cork upbringing, well tanned, on a summer's day, with spade and welly boots. It did not matter that he was even then, quite elderly, and that it was obvious most of the work would not be done by him!

Around this time he thought nothing to circumnavigating the Cave Hill – which meant going as far as Hightown, from Downview Park, via Glengormley - on refashioned hips. This was sometimes much to the concern of his family, especially as he made these trips alone. To those of us who have always lived in the city, it was so clear that Joe brought a different culture and a different time into the mix. Adding such colour as he did, meant I was continually confronted and

fascinated by his presence, ever teasing out the traits that contributed to his strong local (Cork) identity.

It is, as they say, always challenging to be faced with views and experiences different or divergent from one's own and I realised how cocooned I had been. I had not previously been exposed to such friendly 'regionalism' and Joe provided this. Busy and very active, he knew how to let time flow and sometimes one needed a lot of time when talking with Joe, for Joe liked talking. He was, in effect, saying to a younger generation, like myself, to be less urgent, slow-down a while and let country ways of relating come into the city.

He did not intend to set himself up for comparison, but taken by the precision with which some of his neighbours trimmed their hedges, I couldn't help notice that he planted a very accurate line of marigolds, religiously carried out, year by year. Joe spoke to me of a lesson he had learned - be the person time has made of you, it is that uniqueness which makes each one of us distinct. Joe was unafraid to be singular and particular, so thank you Joe, for that. Joe had a long life and his funeral service was filled with music, in an uplifting service. I for one, was so glad to be at the Belfast Castle event afterwards, a very cordial, relaxed, inclusive affair.

*Timothy Parker*

**SPAR**



**CAVEHILL**

**325 Cavehill Road, Belfast, BT15 5EY**

*It's where you can get  
everything you need!*

**Tel: 028 9039 1500**



# New Hope For Old Venue?

Readers of the Belfast Telegraph may have learned of the renewed efforts to breathe new life into a building which was, until the beginning of the Troubles, one of the most popular entertainment venues in the city.

The Floral Hall, on the slopes of Cave Hill, was the art deco styled dance hall of choice for the many fans who flocked to hear such groups as Pink Floyd and Small Faces; stars such as Lulu and Gene Vincent attracted enthusiastic fans; and locally popular dance bands provided the musical background for many romantic attachments.

The present melancholy condition of the Floral Hall, with its original blue and gold interior long since faded, provides little indication of how popular it once was. Even the Glitter Ball which scattered reflections over dancers has disappeared. Removed over twenty years ago it was taken to the Arts Theatre in Botanic Avenue, and when that other celebrated feature of old Belfast closed down, the Glitter Ball disappeared.

Now civil servant Heather Henderson is making the latest in a series of attempts to reverse the years of neglect. She has launched a Facebook page in order to gather support for such a campaign. The aspiration is to persuade either private interests or public agencies to bring the old venue back to active use.

As John Gray pointed out in an earlier edition of the Cavehill Campaigner, the Floral Hall replaced an earlier bandstand in 1933. Designed by DW Boyd, the new attraction opened in May 1936, and provided seated accommodation for 1,000 people. In his book on the architectural heritage of Belfast, Paul Larmour described it as a striking building, which provided for the city an interesting example of a particular type of 1930s modernism.

The high point of the Floral Hall came in the war years, with the number of dancers reaching almost 200,000 in 1943-1944. Thereafter, attendances declined until by 1970 it was losing £10,000 a year. Teddy Palmer and the Rumble Band played the last gig there in January 1974.

In subsequent decades scheme after scheme to reinvigorate the hall – or even to convert it to alternate use – collapsed. Only the building's upgrade to B1 preservation status prevented it from being demolished. As recently as 2010 new proposals favouring multiple use of the hall, in which commercial events alongside a wider relationship with Belfast Zoo and the community groups, were being considered. One can only hope that Heather Henderson and her supporters are successful in their endeavours. The Cave Hill Conservation Campaign wishes them well.

*Edward McCamley*

**J.D. O'Boyle**

*M.V.B., M.R.C.V.S.*

**Antrim Road  
Veterinary Practice**

321 Antrim Road,  
Belfast, BT15 2HF

Tel: 028 9075 2333  
[www.vetsinbelfast.com](http://www.vetsinbelfast.com)

*The Floral Hall in its heyday:*





# The Hills Are Still The Same

With the death of Seamus Heaney there is a growing consensus that Derek Mahon is the greatest living Irish poet. A wonderfully innovative lyricist, Mahon left his native city but was constantly preoccupied by it, despite his alienation from its rancorous politics. Indeed, on a visit to Montreal in 1967 he took a ferry out on the St Lawrence River and afterwards climbed Mount Royal which reminded him of Belfast's Cave Hill. In one of his poems, Mahon referred to "the hill at the top of the street".

Derek Mahon was born in November 1941 in the shadow of Cave Hill, at Number 1 Kenbella Parade, just off Salisbury Avenue. His father and grandfather had worked in Harland and Wolff's shipyard – and the recently published biography of Mahon by Stephen Enniss is entitled, *After the Titanic*. Until her marriage, his mother worked in York Street Flax Spinning Mill.

From the age of four he was a pupil at Skegoniel Primary School. Interviewed some years ago by the *Paris Review*, Mahon said of the school, "All I see is sunlight, classrooms full of sunlight, or windows streaked with rain – as everybody does." He felt at home there.

With his family, he attended St Peter's Church on the Antrim Road. Although he has made it clear that his parents were not religious enthusiasts, the young Mahon was considered to have a good enough voice to be enrolled in the church choir. His biographer records that the church had been built in 1900 when the surrounding neighbourhoods were spreading north towards Cave Hill. When St Peter's was enlarged in 1933 the Rev J.F. MacNeice officiated at the First Communion service. Coincidentally, it was his son, Louis MacNeice, who was to become the greatest literary influence on Mahon's poetic sensibility. Since MacNeice

---

*St Peter's Church where Derek Mahon was a choirboy*

---





was born, not as most people assume, in Carrickfergus, but in Brookvale Avenue, off the lower Antrim Road, he may also be claimed as a North Belfast man.

When he was seventeen, Mahon's family moved to Glengormley, near where his grandparents lived in a farmhouse. Later the area would be commemorated in a poem entitled Glengormley which was the very first piece in his collection of poems 1962-1978, a Poetry Book Society Recommendation.

*'Wonders are many and none is more wonderful than man'*

*Who has tamed the terrier, trimmed the hedge  
And grasped the principle of the watering-can.  
Clothes-pegs litter the window ledge  
And the long ships lie in clover. Washing lines  
Shake out white linen over the chalk thanes.*

Derek Mahon's career would take him far from the environs of Cave Hill, constantly searching for new experiences in a wider world. However, as he later averred, what is important is the historical sense through which one finds one's bearings in life. As he wrote:

*" But the hills are still the same grey-blue above Belfast."*

Edward McCamley



Above: Derek Mahon's house



Hawthorn berries on Cave Hill



Over 50?

Need help with benefits  
or form filling?

Free confidential advice

Home visits  
can be arranged

151 Cliftonville Road Tel: 028 9075 5894  
Email: olaf@northbelfastseniors.org

**CAVEHILL CHIROPODY** 

166 Cavehill Road

**Mr D Muise**

D.Pod.M., M.Ch.S., S.R.Ch., Hcpc  
Health Professions Council Registered

Special Rates for Pensioners

**Tel: 028 9039 1411**



**Tuckers**  
*Day Today*

**AINSWORTH AVENUE**

Serving the people of the Woodvale and Shankill area for 20 years

Supports The Cave Hill Conservation Campaign



## Wildflower Project

Cave Hill Conservation Campaign proposes to create a wildflower meadow in the Castle grounds this year. We have contacted two local schools, Park Lodge and Ben Madigan Prep and a P4 class from each of these schools will be involved. Belfast City Council will fund the purchase of the necessary materials and do the ground preparation.

The proposed meadow will be at a site along the woodland edge on the way up from the gates at Innisfayle Park through the parkland to the Castle. We will sow bulbs along the woodland edge and about 1000m<sup>2</sup> of poor quality grassland will be sown with native (Northern Irish) grasses and flowers. The ground will need prepared so you will see a patch of dug-over ground in August this year. We will then sow in September. The first year, the meadow will not look great; plants spend that first year concentrating on roots and foliage. The second year should see the meadow in all its glory.

The pupils will actually scatter the seed and sow the bulbs. They will visit the site and see it in all stages of preparation and once it is established, they will be able to survey the flowers along with the bees and butterflies that we hope will be attracted. These surveys can continue over the years until these particular pupils leave and we hope to involve future classes in increasing the size of the patch.

The wildflower meadow will be visible from the gates at Innisfayle Park. There is a rough track up from the gates; go that way and enjoy the flowers, and the insects which we hope will flourish along with it.

*Cormac E Hamill*

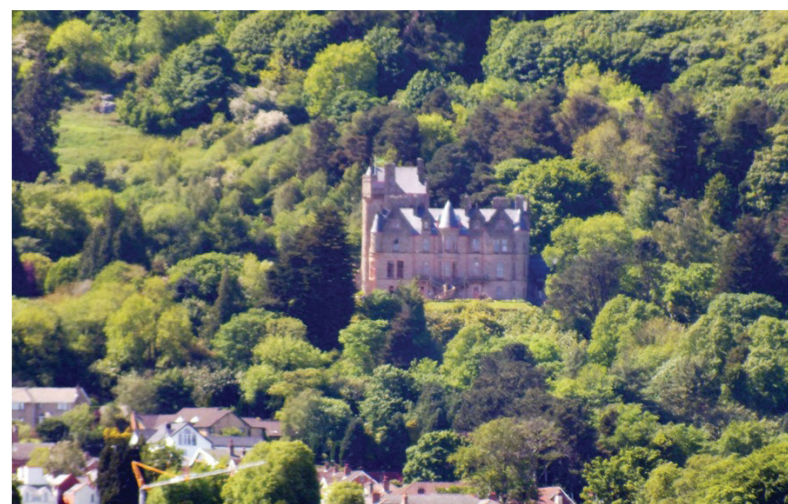


**www.dirtycarswanted.com**  
Car Care Provider  
**1989 - 2014**  
25 Years and Counting  
Full Range of Valeting Services available  
**028 9077 8890**  
(Behind Fortwilliam Shops)

*The Caves on a Snowy Day*



*The Castle In The Park*



**SAN  
MAR  
UNISEX  
SALON**

**SPECIALISTS  
IN  
COLOURING**

Also:

- Eyebrow Waxing •
- Eyebrow Tinting •
- Eyelash Tinting •

640 Antrim Road  
**Tel:**  
**028 9077 7002**



## Hedge Laying in Carr's Glen

On 11 December 2014 members of Cave Hill Conservation Campaign (Tucker and Cormac), members of Belfast Hills Partnership, Hills Rangers and Freddie Harris (Belfast Hills Partnership Volunteer Officer) were lucky to be invited to a hedge laying project organized by Orla Maguire the Biodiversity Officer of Belfast City Council.

The hedge laying project took place on the path leading up from Carr's Glen entrance to Cave Hill Country Park. The hedge layers Davy and Robert (from the Hedge Layers Association Ireland) talked us through the work that they do and decided to let us have a go at hedge laying. It looked very easy watching these guys but I can assure you it wasn't - and the cold and mucky conditions didn't help either. These men work very hard and deserve every penny they get. We were given a safety talk, provided with all the safety gear and were raring to go.

We started by coppicing them (cutting back) and dragging all the old debris out from the bottom of the hedge. About one foot from the ground we cut into the branch at an angle, just enough so that the branch could bend right down but not break and this filled the voids in the hedge. At the point where

the branch was cut and bent over a new growth will emerge from the stump. We then put stakes into the ground at about arms length apart and they were cut to about four foot high. These had been cut off the nearby trees. Now we were told we were going to do some pleaching. Just beside us in the field there was a pile of long branches about 8 foot long and about the thickness of a brush pole. Davy and Robert had cut these off the hedges earlier and now we were going to weave these in and out between the stakes. This is what is known as 'pleaching'. Very slowly our hedge began to take shape, but by this stage it was time for us to leave. We were invited to come back anytime to give Davy and Robert a hand but I think we are better leaving it to the professionals. A good hedge is not just a barrier or fence to keep animals in, it is also a habitat for birds, small animals and insects and looks very impressive as well.

I really enjoyed our day at the hedgelaying project and would strongly recommend others try it or at least have a look at the amazing work Davy and Robert have done.

*Thomas McKinstry*

---

*View from the Zoo.*

---

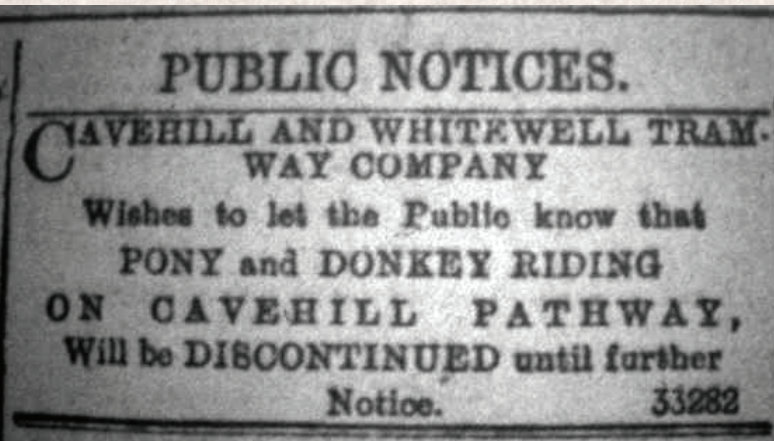




## Looking Back

Whilst the Cave Hill hasn't changed much over the years the people and surrounding area certainly have. The Cave Hill has remained a constant backdrop overseeing Belfast and its inhabitants. Here is a brief collection of some memories recorded in newspapers of days gone-by.

Monday 24 August 1896 the Belfast Telegraph printed the following information:



Although this notice was placed by the Tramway company it is unclear which path it was referring to.

The following photograph appeared in June 1909 with the caption 'Scope for development'.

The accompanying wording read:



*"The Cave Hill footpath which formed the subject of a brief discussion at the Belfast Corporation on Thursday. Councillor Henry Johnston said the Cave*

*Hill could be made a real asset to the city. If it were in the vicinity of some large town in England there would soon be electric trams running to the summit, and the people would make an ideal recreation of it. Alderman Finnigan remarked that as soon as the money was available trams would be run to the top of the hill."*

Not long after this article saw print the Council was planning to build houses right up to the summit! These are two projects which the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign is very glad did not eventuate! The Campaign is also not in favour of motorcycle riding on the Cave Hill which is currently against council by-laws as it can cause major damage to the environment as well as animals and humans. However this didn't seem to be a problem in 1940:

The accompanying caption read:



*"Go-as-you-please" - Competitors in Ulster Motor cycle Club's Reliability Trail over Cave Hill, Belfast.*

*Right - R. Waddell (Triumph) negotiating a 'soft' section of the course.*

Over the years there were many rescues from Cave Hill and some fatalities as well. In January 1938 all the Belfast newspapers carried the story of a 13 year old boy, David Brown of 8 Glentilt Street, who was trapped in the 2nd cave for 21 hours, all through a night on which a severe blizzard had occurred. Two employees of Major Adeley (who lived at Beneden) heard his cries for help from a mile away and raised the alarm. His rescue was very difficult and the fire brigade had to be called in when initial attempts to rescue him failed.





The caption for this photo read: "Belfast Boy's Adventure - arrow indicates Sub-Officer Beattie who lowered the boy to a ledge, where Fireman Morrison received him and in turn lowered him to waiting hands."



This photo shows Sergeant Ormonde with young David and his father at the foot of the cliff.

When rescued the boy claimed he had been kidnapped by two men on the Crumlin Road who dragged him up into the cave against his will - I think somebody might have been making up a story to make himself look innocent! If anyone reading this magazine remembers David maybe

they will be able to fill us in on the truth of the matter!

The next photo is of a happier event that took

place in 1926:



"Beautiful Bellevue - A dance in progress at Bellevue. A remarkable feature of the photograph is the number of men paired, whilst two couples of ladies trip it merrily together." wrote the curious reporter.

Readers familiar with Bellevue Zoo will recognise the dance location as that of the current zoo car park.

If you have any stories about the Cave Hill from years gone by please let us know and it may even be featured in a future issue of the Cave Hill Campaigner!.

*Martin McDowell*

Belfast

The perfect blend of character, charm and sophistication...

**BELFAST  
CASTLE**

**Weddings  
Conferences  
Restaurant  
Fine dining**

**Antrim Road, Belfast**  
Tel: 028 9077 6925



[www.belfastcastle.co.uk](http://www.belfastcastle.co.uk)



# Guided Walks in 2015 – Come And Join Us!

We will be running a series of guided walks on Cave Hill. Most of these walks will be from 10:00 to 13:00 on the third Saturday of each month. Participants should be equipped for inclement weather and wear suitable footwear. Children and young people under 16 must be accompanied by a suitable adult.

Most walks will have a theme where an expert will talk about a particular aspect of the Hill. All walks are free.

For more information, contact us: Website: [www.cavehillconservation.org](http://www.cavehillconservation.org)  
Email: [cormachamill@cavehillconservation.org](mailto:cormachamill@cavehillconservation.org) Phone: (028) 9029 1357

Date	Times	Meet at	Theme	Legend
Saturday 13 June	1000 - 1300	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>Bird Spotting</b>	Bird expert Aidan Crean will put up mist nets to ring and record both native birds and summer visitors.
Saturday 20 June	1000 - 1300	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>A Summer Woods Experience</b>	Be amazed at the many uses our native plants can serve!
Saturday 18 July	1000 - 1300	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>Butterflies and Minibeasts</b>	Get up close to some of these most lovely creatures.
Saturday 15 August	1000 - 1300	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>Ballyaghagan &amp; Cave Hill</b>	Walk through Ballyaghagan Nature Reserve and over the top of Cave Hill.
Friday 21 August	21:00	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>Bats at the Castle</b>	A dusk hunt around Belfast Castle to find, identify and record bats.
Saturday 19 Sept.	1000 - 1300	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>History &amp; Heritage</b>	Learn about the many historical places on the hill.
Friday 25 Sept.	20:00	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>Cave Hill by Moonlight</b>	New! Late evening walk to appreciate the magic of nature at dusk and beyond. Bring binoculars if you can.
Saturday 17 Oct.	1000 - 1300	Front door of Belfast Castle	<b>Fungi</b>	Join the Northern Ireland Fungus Group in a hunt for fungi.



## CALLING ALL MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS!

If you are a member wishing to renew your membership for 2015, or a new member wishing to join, it's never been simpler! You can either join at our Annual General Meeting or attach a cheque to the form below and send it to:

Cave Hill Conservation Campaign, 32 Waterloo Park, Belfast, BT15 5HU

*All e-mail addresses will be kept secure and only used to communicate with our members*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

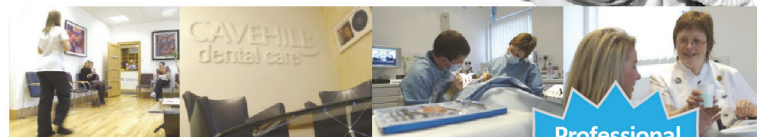
- ☐ £10 Waged
- ☐ £5 Unwaged (Please tick appropriate box)
- ☐ If you are a current British taxpayer, please tick here (we will then be able to reclaim the income tax already paid from the Inland Revenue. Ticking this box will not cost you any more money, but will benefit the Cave Hill Conservation Campaign.)

*The Cave Hill Conservation Campaign is a Registered Charity  
(Charity Number XR96728)*

*"We gratefully thank Ulster Bank for their donation towards the printing cost of this magazine."*

## CAVEHILL dental care

everyone smiles in the same language :)



### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Dental Implants
- Aesthetic Crowns, Veneers & Bridges
- Periodontology (Gum Treatments)
- Intravenous or Gas & Air Sedation
- Orthodontics (Tooth Straightening Invisible Braces)
- Denture Stabilisation using Mini Implants (1hr)
- Removal of Wisdom teeth
- Hygienist service
- Anti-wrinkle injections

**Professional Tooth Bleaching**  
Using Custom Trays  
**Only £169**  
(for a limited period)  
Tooth Bleaching Gift Vouchers Now Available

We register  
New NHS,  
Denplan and  
Private  
patients

Find us on  
**Facebook**  
GDC Reg No 66023

Denplan, Private, NHS accepted. Finance packages available for dental care.

165 -167 Cavehill Road  
Belfast, BT15 5BP

Tel: 028 9037 0206  
Fax: 028 9037 0227

Enquiries@denal-implants.org  
[www.dental-implants.org](http://www.dental-implants.org)