Annual Newsletter 2025

Association of Friends of Fermanagh County Museum

Looking Back on 2025

The New Year began with Storm Éowyn on January 24th. The impact of this led to the rescheduling of the Friends Trip to the new Peace Campus in Monaghan. The 2025 Exhibition Programme continued to focus on the importance of preserving historic archives; developing partnerships; celebrating creativity and promoting wellbeing. The collections grew in no small part to a large donation of receipts and billheads from the Blake Family Business Collection. The year ended with extended opening over the Christmas and New Year period with a range of art workshops for adults, activities for children and an Afro Fermanagh celebration.

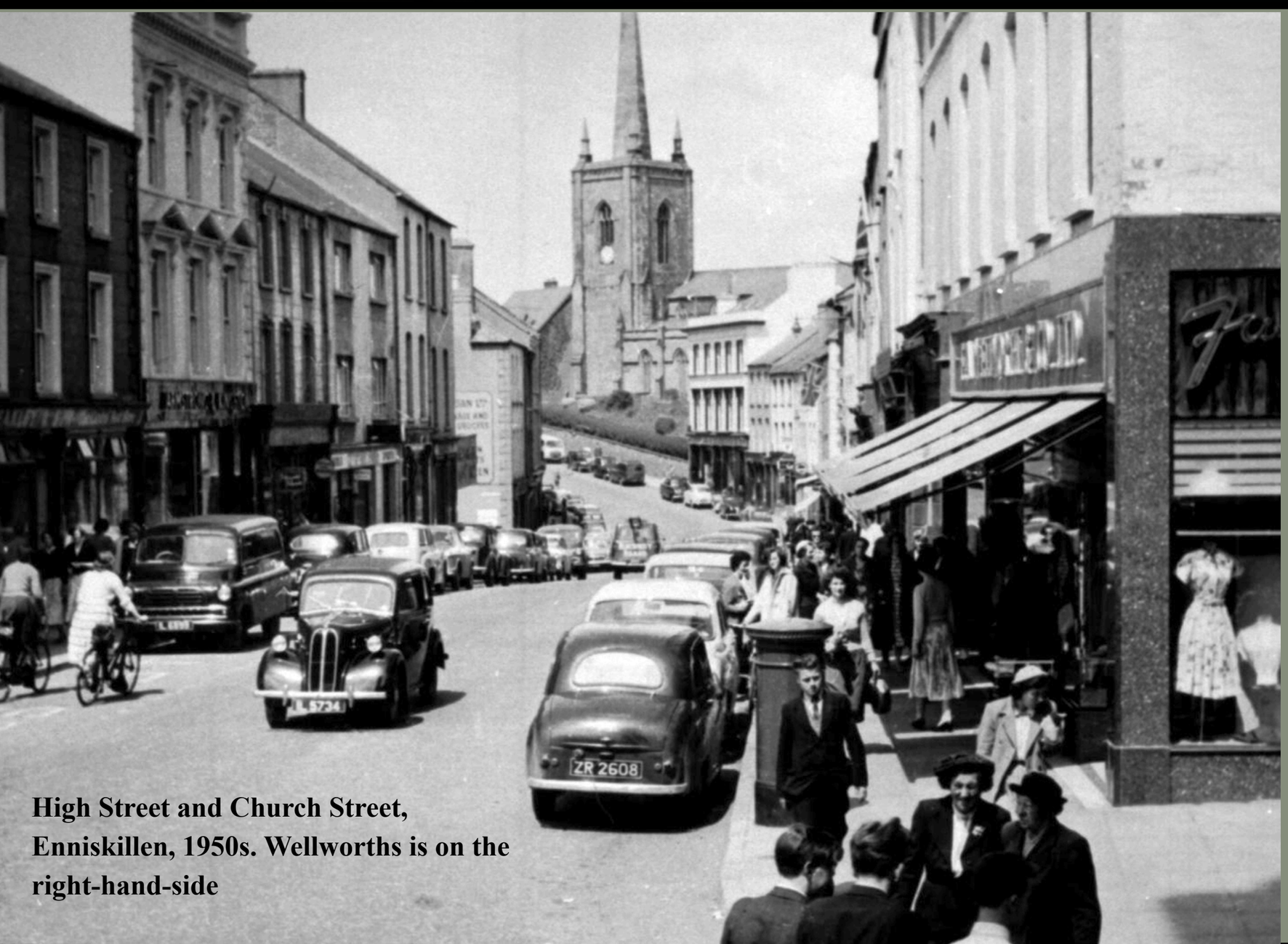
Friends Trip to Monaghan County Museum and the Peace Campus 26 April 2025

Curator of Monaghan County Museum, Liam Bradley gave the Museum Friends a special tour of the Museum's new home in the Peace Campus.





The Curator took us around the new galleries before giving the Friends a talk about the evolution of the Museum and the wider Peace Campus. Monaghan County Museum generously provided our group with lunch as part of the visit.



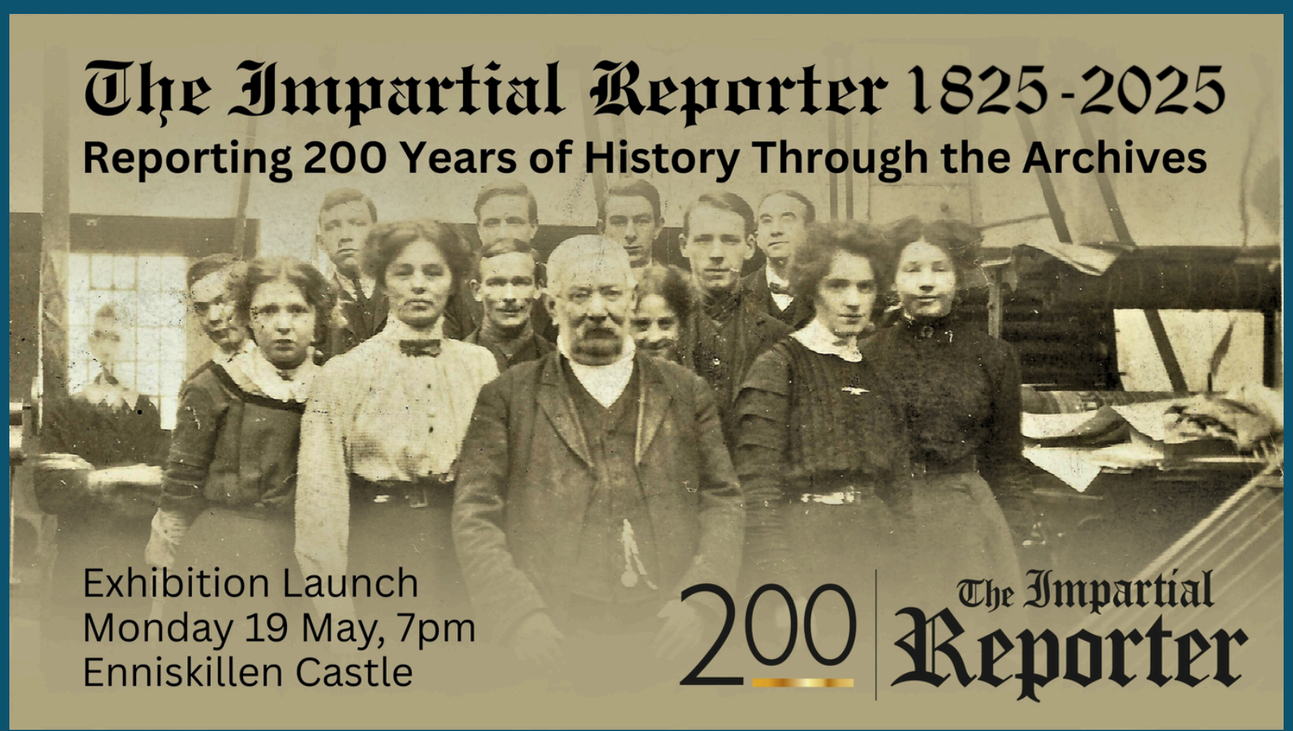
High Street and Church Street, Enniskillen, 1950s. Wellworths is on the right-hand-side

Friends AGM, followed by "Talking Shop, Taking Stock", 28 June 2025

Catherine Scott led a fascinating reminiscence session following the AGM. The session focused on sharing memories of shopping and working in F.A. Wellworths & Co., Ltd. Wellworths was launched in Enniskillen in 1936. Brothers Charlie and Frederick Moore opened their first store in East Bridge Street selling toys, fancy goods, confectionary and light hardware.

Programme of Exhibitions

- “Grey Matter over Clay Matter: a collective celebration of 10 years of workshops with Jim Fee”
- “The Impartial Reporter 1825-2025: Reporting 200 Years of History Through the Archives”
- “The Backstreet Boys: The Great War Sacrfice of Enniskillen’s Dardanelles” presented by Fermanagh County Museum, produced in partnerhip with Fermanagh Genealogy Centre and the Inniskillings Museum
- The Wine Geese Exhibition & Festival 2025" organised by Dr David McNulty
- “Curved Earth: Ceramic Forms in Spiral Balance” by Pádraig Drugan
- “Source to Settlement: The Shore Collective looks at Fermanagh’s waterways



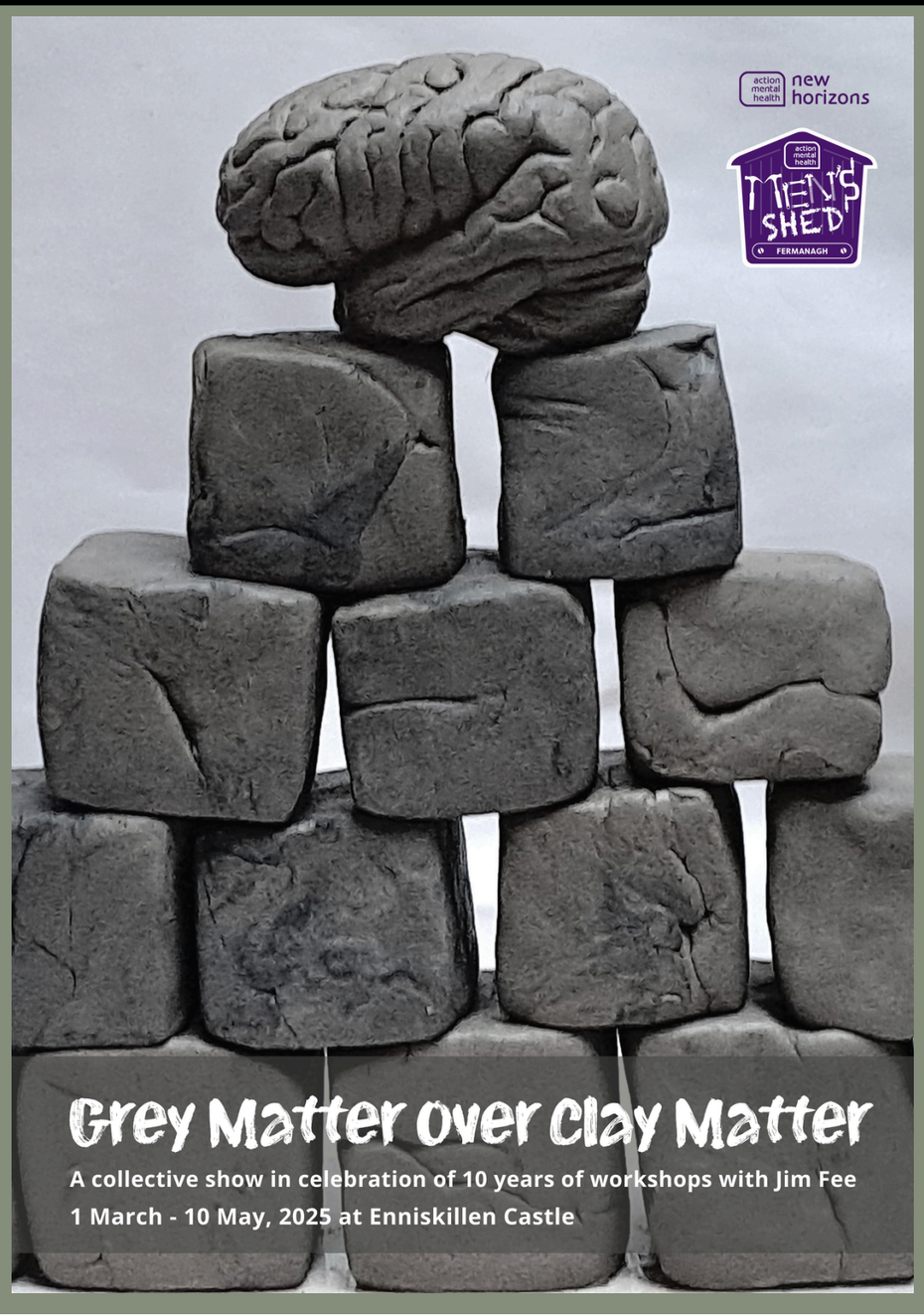


Following on from The Impartial Reporter exhibiton, the Trimble family kindly donated “The Nook” to the Museum. The wooden arch was carved by John Scott; his grandson, William Scott, who later became the reknowned artist, was employed to decorate the fretwork with gold leaf (since disappeared). The arch was originally commissioned for the Trimble’s home in Century House, Enniskillen. It now takes pride of place at the entrance to the Castle Walkway.



“Spiral Infinity Egg Blue” by Pádraig Drugan was generously purchased by the Friends for the museum collection.





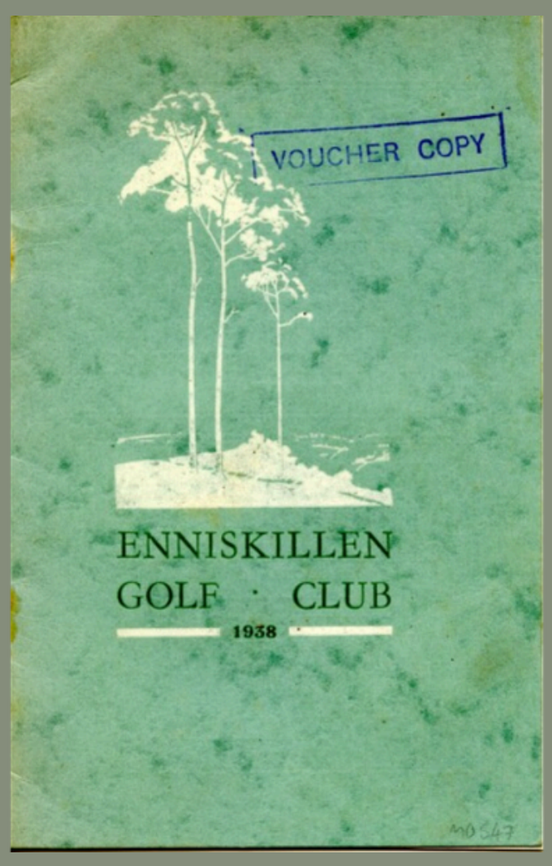


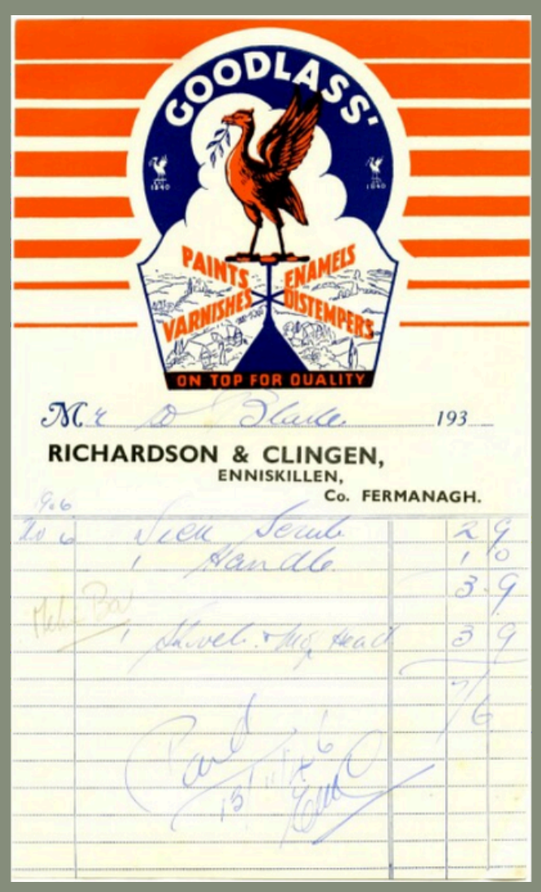
Our collections have developed through the generosity of individuals, the Friends of Fermanagh County Museum and with assistance from funding bodies. Thank you!

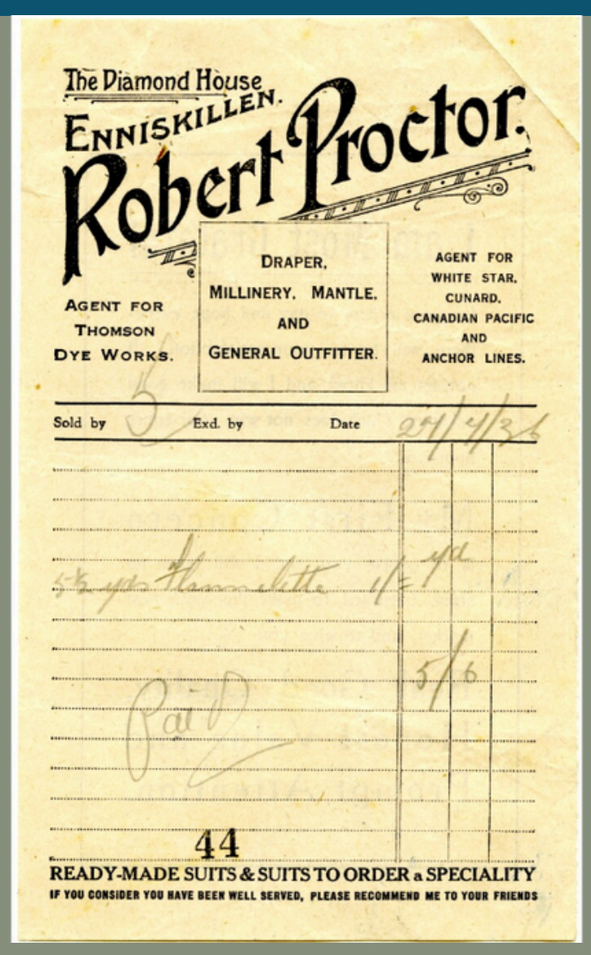
In 2025, 968 artefacts were accessioned into our collections. Out of these, 755 are part of the Blake Family Business Collection, kindly donated by the Blake family. The records not only document everyday transactions but also evoke cherished memories—a reminder of many of long-standing establishments, some of which still thrive today. A range of examples is illustrated below.

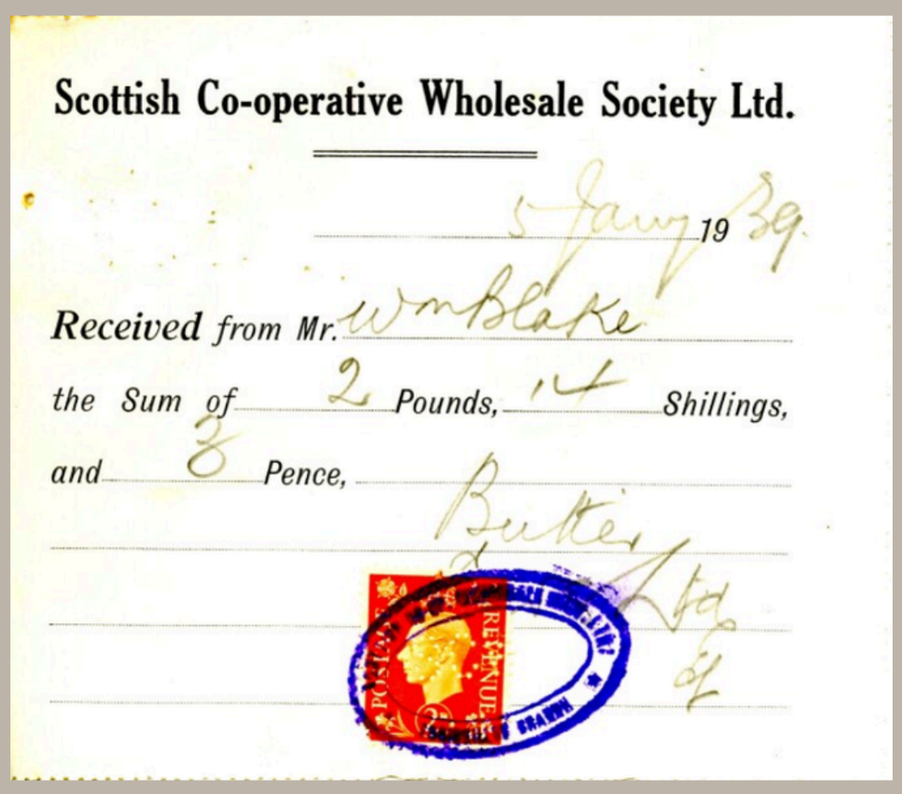
The number of our collections available to explore and enjoy online continues to grow here:

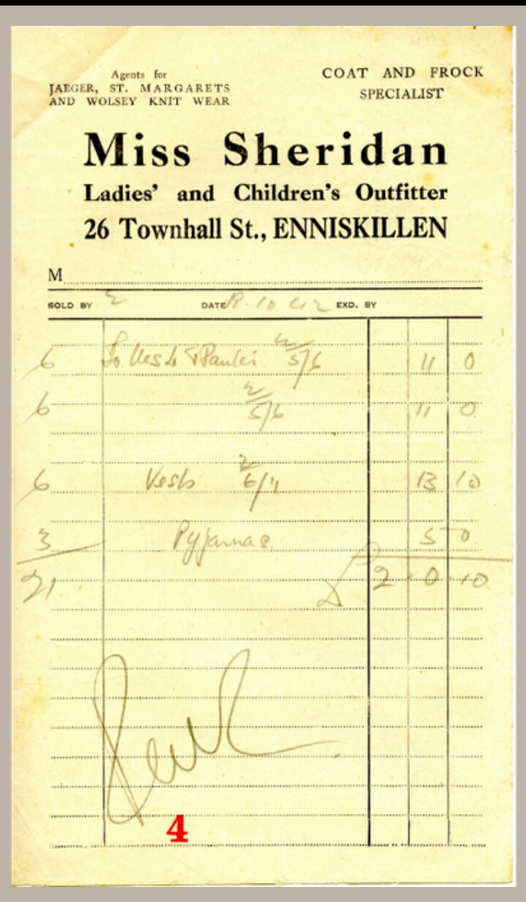
https://collectionsonline.fermanaghomagh.com

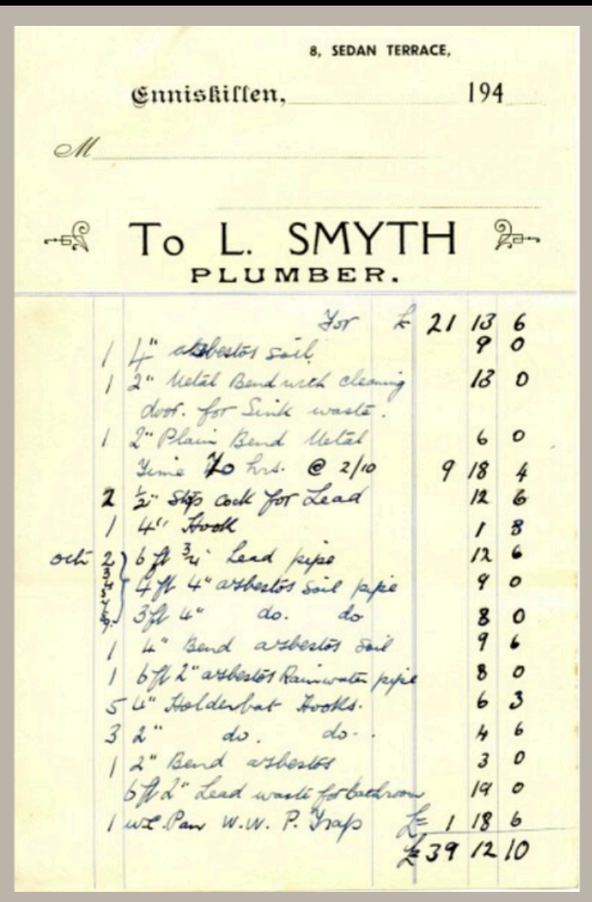


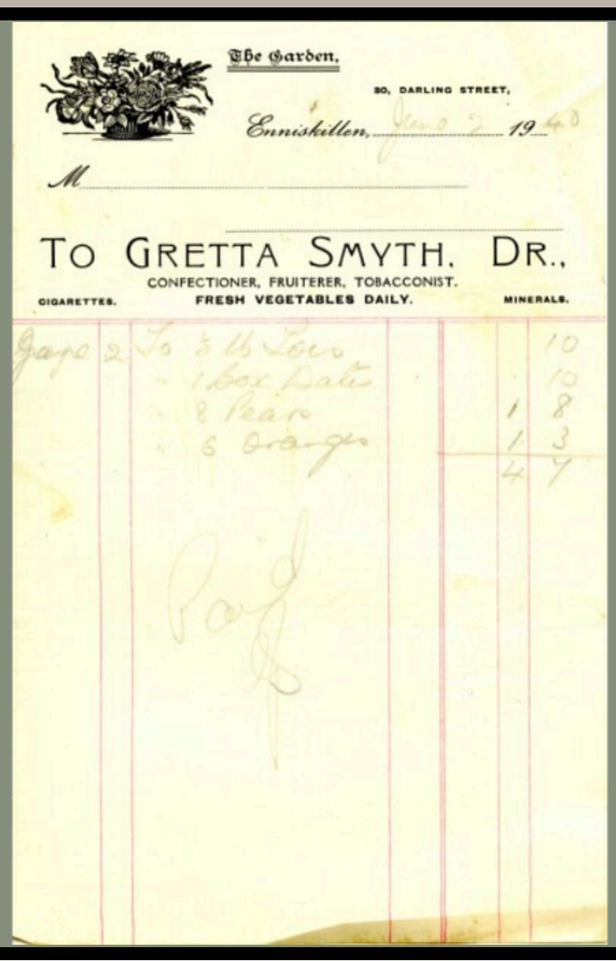


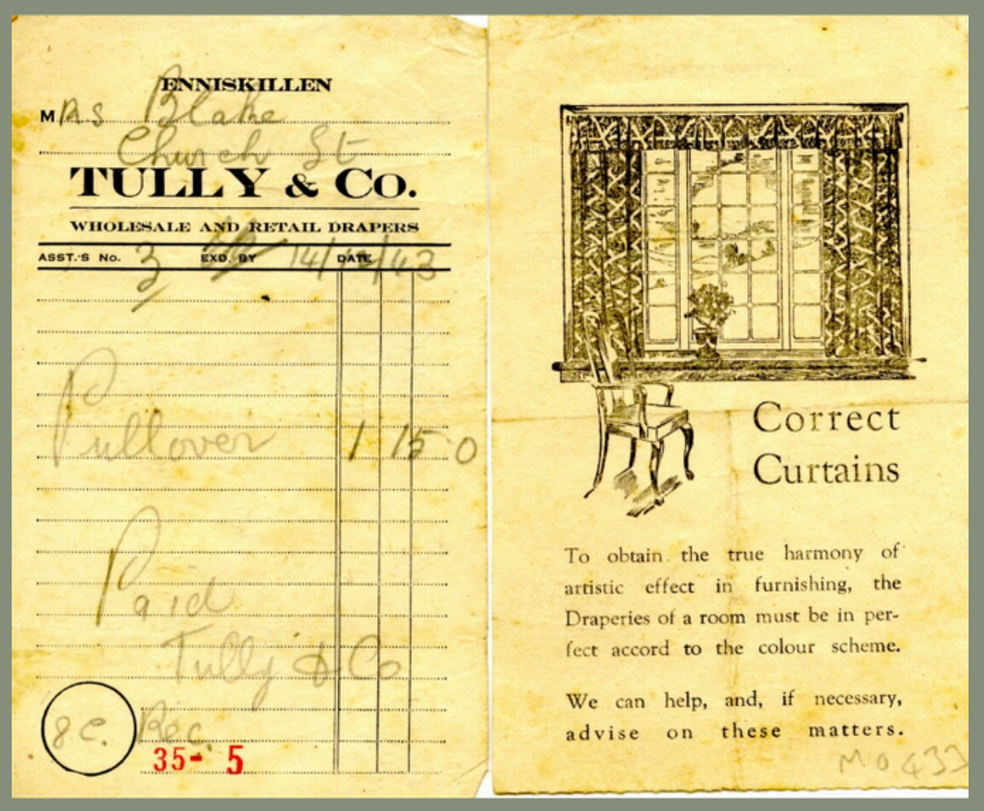


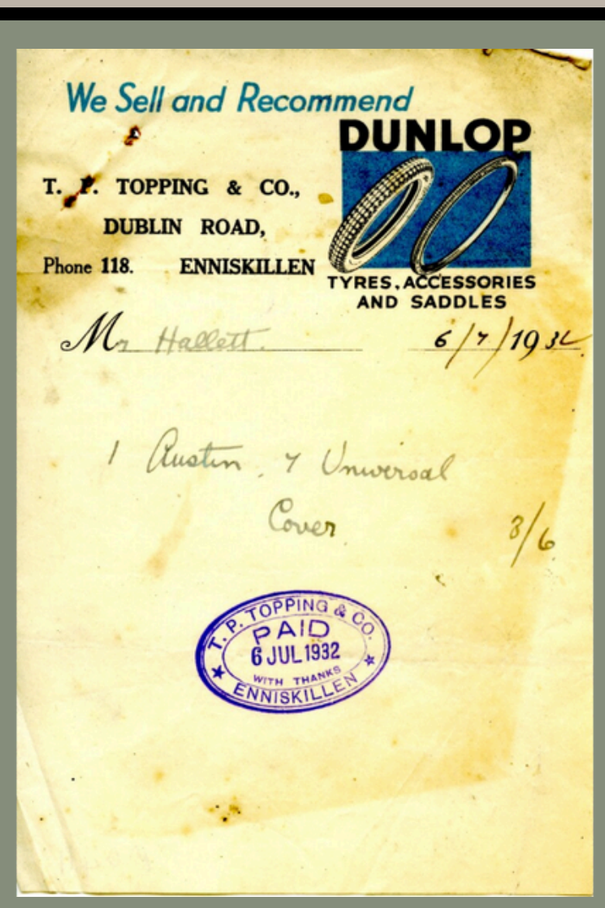












And more...

In addition to our ongoing annual activities and children's workshops, the public programme at Enniskillen Castle included new events:

- "The Call: an art exhibition to encourage discussions on the importance of paediatric organ donation" (Hosted)
- "Introduction to Irish" (Hosted)
- Part of Inaugural Fermanagh Camino (Hosted)
- "Pottery Made Fun and Easy" with Jim Fee
- "A Cold Eye: Notes from a Shared Island" - discussion and reading with Carlo Gébler
- "The Sunday Papers: Barney Maglone, all joking aside, in the 1850s" with Seamas MacAnnaidh
- Fermanagh Feast & Folk Festival (Hosted)
- "To Keriolet Again" - launch of a new novel by Seamas Mac Annaidh (Hosted)
- "The Unbroken Covenant" - book launch with Samuel G. Beckton (Hosted)
- "Around the Town, Around the Table Tour"
- "The Shared Past of Desmonds" - talk by Dr Johnny Hamill
- Twilight Harvest Market (Hosted)
- Caves to Castle Combo Ticket
- Lunchtime Carols with Harmonise
- Méara Smeadráilte Bilingual Messy Play (Hosted)
- Wreath-making Christmas Workshop
- "Press to Impress" Clay Workshop with Jim Fee
- Afro Fermanagh Feast



One of Jim Fee's "Press to Impress" clay workshops which took place over the Christmas and New Year period.



Seamas Mac Annaidh with his daugher, Raphaelle, presenting Museum Manager, Sarah McHugh, with a copy of his book along with his distinctive orange fleece to the collections.

In summary

In 2025, **102,459** people visited Enniskillen Castle; **7** exhibitions were opened; **7** talks were held; **4** trails were offered; **37** additional events held; 968 objects, documents & photographs were accessioned into our collections; **17,207** school children, students and adults participated in our education and outreach programmes.

Plus, 1 New Heritage Plan

The Museum contributed to an extensive programme of consultation for the creation of a Fermanagh and Omagh District Heritage Plan. Copies are **available online.**