

Introduction

When, in 1988, members of The Poyntzpass and District Local History Society took the decision to publish a magazine it was envisaged that it would be a 'one off' venture. However, such was the popularity of that first production that a further six journals were produced in the following years, number seven appearing in 1994. This, the eighth edition of 'Before I forget...' comes after a gap of six years. This gap was not as a result of lack of material nor to lack of interest from the public. There have been plenty of very interesting talks given to the society in the interim and if the editor had the proverbial pound for every time he was asked, "When is the next magazine coming out?" he would be able to take a long holiday! It is simply attributable to that affliction which seems to beset all of us in this modern world - not being able to find the time.

However with the advent of the millennium it was decided that such a significant event should not pass unmarked and a sub-committee was formed with the production of this magazine as its objective. This committee has worked exceptionally well and, with every member making a sizeable contribution to the work, has made the editor's job very much easier. I would like, particularly, to thank John Campbell for the massive amount of work he has done to bring this publication about.

There have been many changes since our last production and, sadly, in this edition we include obituaries of several stalwart members no longer with us.

The articles published here are largely based on talks given to our society during 1992-3 and cover a range of topics which, it is hoped, will maintain the level of interest and standard of earlier issues.

In 1997 some members of the society spent several evenings recording the headstone inscriptions in Old Acton Graveyard. These along with the inscriptions from Acton parish Churchyard, Poyntzpass, are included as appendices to Barbara Best's history of Acton Parish Church. Also included is a contribution by Francois Brichot who, as a young Belgian soldier, was stationed here in 1945. His account will, we hope, evoke happy memories for many.

There have been other changes, too. Billy McVicker, who served us so well as printer of our previous journals, has retired. We wish him a happy retirement. There have been amazing advances in printing technology since our first issue in 1988 and the computer has, to a large extent, taken over from the traditional printing methods. Many of the old printing skills which were used for centuries are now redundant but we are confident that the high quality of the finished product will be maintained. It is our hope that you will find something to interest, enlighten or amuse you in this edition and that, perhaps, in 2001 there may be another edition, if we can find the time!

Frank Watters
Editor

October 2000.

Acknowledgements

The Poyntzpass and District Local History Society is grateful to all who helped in any way in the production of this edition of 'Before I forget...' We are particularly grateful to those who have contributed articles, documents or photographs and to our advertisers whose generous support is greatly appreciated. Thanks to Terry Grant and to Eddie and Paul Byrne for their invaluable help with photographs, to Donal Jennings for his technical assistance, and to Graceland Print and Design for their advice and expertise.