



The water around the Broadmeadow forms a magical stream of memories, of journeys, of days playing, fishing, swimming and being young.

A place in the heart of locals and visitors; a place where childhoods were spent, romances blossomed, and family days were full of fun by the water overlooked by the castle and Watergate.

The Police Pavilion and pitch, close to the castle, saw cricket, rugby and school athletics played by police teams, local teams and schools, alongside visiting sportsmen. When the local GAA sold their field across the water on the Sligo Road, they played their Gaelic games here too.

The Broadmeadow has always been a place where sports were played. Cricket, rugby, football, Gaelic games, boxing, horse jumping and school athletics were all played along the meadow.

The Fermanagh Lakeland Forum opened on 19 May 1976, it was a logical decision to locate the sports centre in Enniskillen and along the Broadmeadow. It was opened by William (Willie) J. McBride M.B.E., a former rugby union footballer.

Around the Meadow is a celebration of The Broadmeadow and these meadow memories; just a short path along the water's edge on the west of the town it has, for decades, been enjoyed by many.

An associated exhibition celebrates the Around the Meadow trail and can be viewed in Enniskillen Castle from June to December 2021.

Football continues to be played on the Broadmeadow as it has been for decades; both formal tournaments and friendly kickabouts. From the early C20th the Enniskillen Corinthians played all their home games on the Broadmeadow.

Enniskillen Rangers formed in 1954, sharing the ground with the Corinthians for home games, every other Saturday. The big summer competition was organised by John Jones, a bookmaker in the town.

International players, like Derek Doogan, from Belfast, who played for the Wolverhampton Wanderers and Johnny Crossan from Derry, and who played for Manchester City, would play for local teams under different names.

In both photographs below you can see the clocktower of the townhall. Still an easy way to quickly look up and see the time.



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Look across to the Sligo Road to the Scotch Store (built 1885 - 1899). The Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society SCWS began in Glasgow in 1868. In 1885 it set up a buying depot in Enniskillen. The “Scotch Store” runs in a north to south curve on the main Sligo Road into Enniskillen. The main products collected were butter, eggs, pigs (slaughtered on site) and seasonal fruit and fowl. At Christmas the factory processed turkeys. The Scottish Wholesale Co-operative (SWCS) in Enniskillen employed 86 in 1929.



Interior view of the Scotch Store showing Josie Feeley and Lillie Henderson, both of Dame Street, earning extra money for Christmas by plucking turkeys. The products were transported by train and steamer to Glasgow through Derry and Belfast ports. ©FODC Museum Services



Thistlebank House was built for the manager 1893. ©Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland

## We didn't need clocks

*“I got up in the morning and I could hear the Angelus coming up from the Convent; I can still hear it. We didn't need clocks. We could hear a horn from Lisbellaw, from the factory there...”*

*...that came in at five to eight if the wind was in the right direction. At nine o'clock we got the Angelus, at twelve o'clock we got the Angelus, and at quarter to one, one, and two we got two horns. The gas works down in Gas Lane, the horn went off there at one o'clock and the Scotch Store at Sligo Road, they had a horn at two o'clock. We had the Lisbellaw horn at five and another from the Scotch Store or the Gas Works and we had the clock on Forthill in between. So we didn't really need watches or clocks at all. It was a very very evocative time.”*

There are no strangers here; only friends you haven't yet met. Many friendships were forged on the path along the water's edge. The meadow was always, and still is a place to see a familiar face.

This sign is placed next to a seated area where you are invited to stop and chat, make friends and exchange memories.



©FODC Museum Services



©FODC Museum Services

*“To me, fair friend, you never can be old,  
For as you were when first your eye I ey'd,  
Such seems your beauty still.”*

“Sonnet 104”, William Shakespeare

Cast your line and capture a memory. As an island town the locals and visitors fished along the shoreline on the Broadmeadow. The daily catch was pike, bream, perch, and a little peace and quiet.



Above @ FODC Museum Services  
Michael Greenaway and Michael Coburn at the stern of a fishing boat at Weir's Bridge, Enniskillen, 1959.



Above: Fishing Basket  
Given by: Paddy-Joe Slevin, Belleek. Always handy to have an extra storage accessory for the fishing pole.



*You shall have a fishie in a little dishie  
You shall have a fishie when the boat  
comes in*

Cast away your troubles

When you are on the broadmeadow, take a moment to look across to Castle Island, or do you call it something else? Sally's Island, Sallow Island, Lally's Island or Irvine's Island? The house pictured was built in 1870s by William Irvine.

What memories do you have of the island?

The small boys who lived in the house were rowed across to the Sconce in the morning and made their way to school along the meadow.

©FODC Museum Services



©Lawrence Collection, NLI



©FODC Museum Services

*Row a Boat to Devenish  
Devenish is full of fish*

*Row, Row your boat gently down the stream  
Merrily, merrily, merrily life is but a dream*

The Smell of freshly baked bread

There were two bakeries close by: the Ulster Co-operative Bakery (the co-op), now the site of the BT building, and Whaley's Bakery in Paget Square, now Barbour Court housing. Paris buns were a strong favourite.

Can you imagine the smell of freshly baked bread?

PHONE 400 60

Date *25/1/33*

M *Boath*

Received from  
**THE WHALEY BAKING COY.**  
PAGET SQUARE,  
ENNISKILLEN

QUANTITY	ITEM	Q	U	A
1	Bread			37
	Paas, Large			
	.. Small			
	.. Brown			
	Crusties, Large			
	.. Small			
1	Buns, Plain			10
	.. Paris			
	Paas, Brown			
	.. White			
	Fruit Loaves, 1/-			
	.. " 6d.			
	Pastry			
TOTAL				47

*25/1/33*

Whaley Bakery ©FODC Museum Services



A receipt from Whaley's Bakery from 1933 for a dozen loaves and a dozen plain buns. ©FODC Museum Services

*"I do like a little butter to my bread."*

A.A Milne

The slide was organised once a year on the "Tennis", Wellington Place.

The slide was organised by a Mr Allen, who was responsible for setting up a Youth Club in Henry Street, just across the water. 'The Tennis' was so-called simply because the area had been tennis courts.

Perhaps you were  
in the queue?



Dances were held in a large marquee at the Broadmeadow. Many a romance blossomed flourished hand in hand around the meadow. A place where romances started and lifelong friendships were made.



Pictured at Enniskillen Railway station: The newlyweds Mr & Mrs Beatty, 1957

© FODC Museum Services

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## Down By the Salley Gardens

*Down by the salley gardens  
my love and I did meet;  
She passed the salley gardens  
with little snow-white feet.  
She bid me take love easy,  
as the leaves grow on the tree;  
But I, being young and foolish,  
with her would not agree.*

*In a field by the river  
my love and I did stand,  
And on my leaning shoulder  
she laid her snow-white hand.  
She bid me take life easy,  
as the grass grows on the weirs;  
But I was young and foolish,  
and now am full of tears.*

W.B. Yeats

The Sconce or “Skonce”. A natural meeting point along the meadow, (the small grassy bank, beside the jetty).

On the lough shore just south east of the castle along the broadmeadow, this grassy bank is the remains of an earlier defensive earthwork built to protect Enniskillen castle. The sconce was a great place for hide and seek.

Look at how little of St. Michael’s Church you can see from the sconce in the photograph. Perhaps you can remember when the steeple was added?

The meadow was the place to go with the family as seen in these beautiful family pictures.



Joanne Henderson, Queen Street



The Quinn Family, Queen St. Left to Right, Joe, Margaret, Mary, their daddy, Paul, holding baby Pat, brother Paul by his side.

## Horrible History...

Irish general, RC Bishop Heber MacMahon, captured near Kilskeery, by Major King, Governor of Enniskillen, was hanged here in 1650. The governor of the town did try to save his life, but the execution went ahead at the command of the Parliamentary leader, Sir Charles Coote.

The bishop’s head was placed on a spike on the tower of Enniskillen Castle and his trunk buried on Devenish Island.

Dipping your toes and skimming stones in the water.

The magic of the water that surrounds the town is unique. Sitting by the water's edge and dipping your toes is magical too.

Children, big and small, still dip their toes and try to skim stones. Time spent by the water or dipping your toes in by the water's edge is still a magical feeling. Trips to the seaside by train were a real treat for many children.



Relaxing by the Shore, c.1901  
© Fermanagh County Museum.

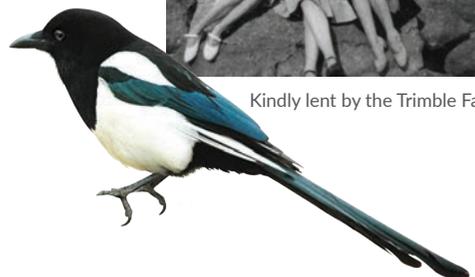
## The Magpie Poem

*One for sorrow, two for joy,  
three for a girl, four for a boy,  
five for silver, six for gold,  
seven for a secret never to be told,  
eight for a letter over the sea,  
nine for a lover as true as can be*

*Do you salute a single magpie?*



Kindly lent by the Trimble Family



Take a moment, make a memory.  
No one else can remember your memories.  
Take a picture, a return ticket, to a moment otherwise gone.

The history of the town of Enniskillen is shaped by the water;  
it shapes many of our memories too.

©FODC Museum Services



Above: Sisters, Marguerite (Rita), and Edith Kidd daughters of Leonard Kidd M.D, Chief Surgeon of the County Infirmary 1897-1937. Possibly taken at Castle Caldwell, 1901.

The family lived at Westbridge House Annie King Collection. © Fermanagh County Museum.



## What's in your Picnic Basket?

There are many popular picnic spots along the Lough. Do you have a favourite spot?

Taylor Woods staff picnic on White Island, 1961  
©FODC Museum Services



From the Gunning Family Album  
©FODC Museum Services

## Time with Family

Perhaps the most important memories people have of the meadow is playing with their brothers, sisters and friends. Taking the baby for walk in the pram, a family picnic or an evening stroll.



Mary Toland (nee Preston) pictured with her 4 children in the garden of their house, which stood on the site of the present Visitor Information Centre.  
©FODC Museum Services

## Thank you for visiting “Around the Meadow”

Attending the launch ...

The Chair of Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Councillor Errol Thompson officially launched “Around the Meadow” on 28 July 2021. Attending the launch, Ethel Oldcroft from South West Age Partnership said:

*“This trail is a path of memories for me. The Broadmeadow was my playground as a child, it wasn’t like this then just a waste ground and two football fields.”*



for more information on Age Friendly visit:

<https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/services/community/agefriendly/>



Around the Meadow is part of Femanagh and Omagh District Council Age Friendly Strategy to allow older people to lead more independent, engaged and socially connected lives and is funded through the Department for Communities Access and Inclusion.



An Roinn Pobal

Department for Communities

