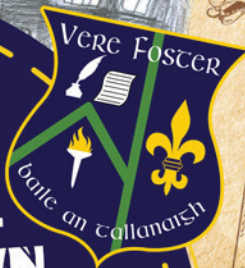




VERE FOSTER
MEMORIAL SCHOOL
TALLANSTOWN

OUR LOCAL HISTORY



Louth Hall cottages



INTRODUCTION

Heritage Keepers is a programme for schools and communities that will enable them to explore the built, natural and cultural heritage of their local place and then plan a fund action to enhance their place. We applied for this project because we wanted to keep the heritage of Tallanstown alive. We went on a heritage walk around the village and looked at all the old and recent buildings which over the years played a part in Tallanstown's history. We wanted to make a booklet so that the history of our village would not be lost and would be available for future generations in our school.

As part of the project we researched different areas of our Local history and buildings. We spoke with members of our community. We looked up a website called Duachas.ie and looked at the Schools Collection from 1938 and we found articles written about our local area by children that were in the school at the time. We also found articles about games they played in school at that time.

We really enjoyed reading about the history of Tallanstown and listening to local people tell their stories while researching for our project. We hope you enjoy reading about our local area.

We are grateful to Heritage Keepers for the funding to produce this booklet and outdoor information sign on our School History. *5th class Tallanstown National School 2025*



Heritage Keepers

LOUTH HALL

Louth Hall has a rich history, dating back to the 14th century. It was reconstructed to its present form in 1760. It was originally a modest estate, but over time it grew to become an important landmark in the region. It was a major estate in Tallanstown that helped shape the village's development. The village was initially built to house the workers of the estate. The cottages which form the central triangle were built in the early 19th century.

Its location in County Louth also ties Louth Hall to regional developments, both in terms of agriculture and the wider social landscape of the time. In the 18th and 19th century Development: Louth Hall was a Georgian country house, designed to show wealth and influence. When it was first built it is said by local people that it was told to block off one of the windows as it had one more window than Buckingham Palace and this was not allowed. Over time, the house underwent several modifications to reflect changing architectural tastes, including elements of the Victorian era.



The ruins at Louth Hall essentially comprise of two adjoining castles. The original Gothic style tower house was built circa 1350 with the later Georgian section added much later in around 1760. The house and surrounding lands appear to have been under the control of the Plunkett family from the 1500s right up until the early part of the twentieth century but may have been in their hands since the original Gothic tower house was constructed. The Plunkett's family most famous son, Saint Oliver Plunkett was executed at Tyburn on July

1st 1681 for his catholic faith. He was canonised in 1975, his head is on display in St. Peter's church in Drogheda.

The last Plunkett left the house in 1950 and sadly the structure suffered heavily in a fire, leaving the ruins of the two castles and outbuildings to the cattle that now roam the site.

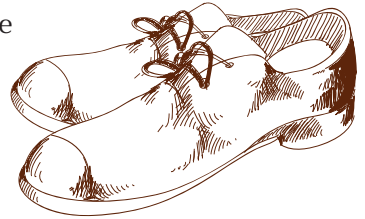


GLYDE COURT

GLYDE COURT AND THE FOSTER FAMILY HISTORY



Glyde Court was a late 18th century house. It was built in 1780 and remodeled in 1868, to a Jacobean style. The long elevation had curvilinear gables and two curved bows. It was built by the Foster family, relations of Vere Foster. Vere came on his holidays to Glyde Court and found famine, he gave up his job and spent his money on helping people in Ireland during the famine and gave money towards education. He donated the money to build the Old School in Tallanstown.



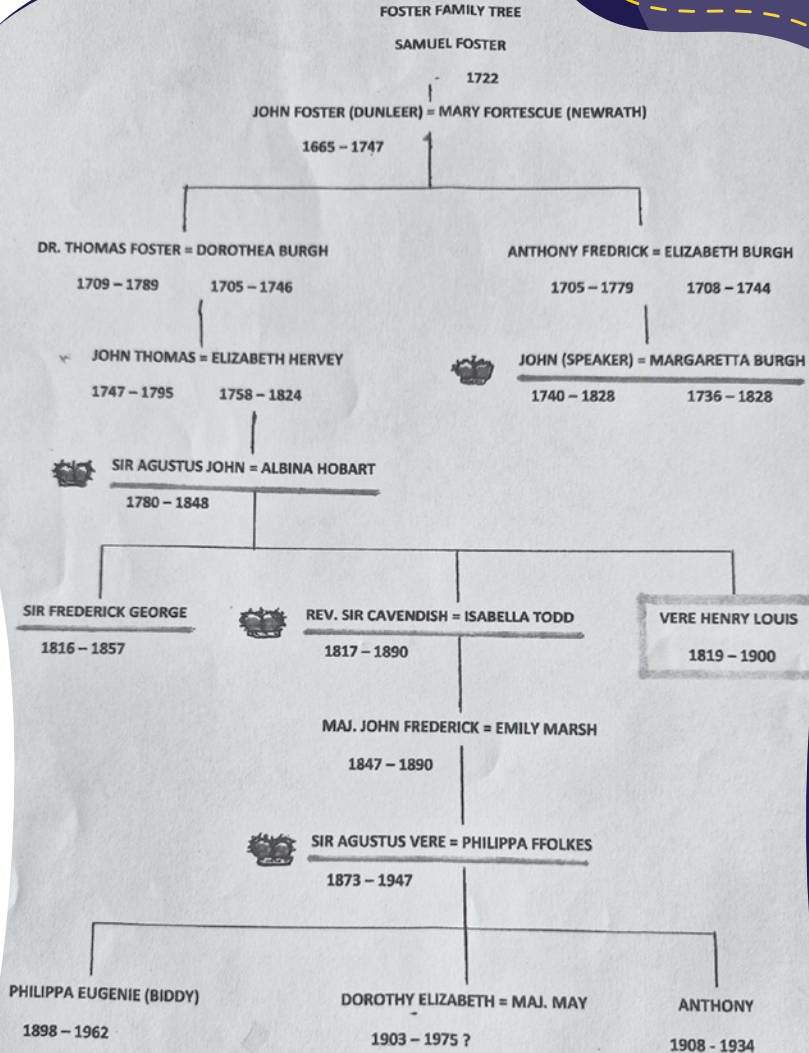
There was one Harry Clarke window in Glyde Court. But unfortunately, when Glyde Court fell into ruins it disappeared, and hasn't been found since, sadly.

The last baronet to live in Glyde court was Sir Augustus Vere . A family portrait was painted by Sir William Orpen KBE in 1907, and is on display at the National Gallery of Ireland. His daughter Betty Foster commonly known as Biddy used to lead a band from Glyde Court to the mound in Maguire Park on the 19th of August every year. She was last to live in the house and when she died, it was sold. Everything was auctioned off and unfortunately it now lies in ruins.



William Orpen
The Vere Foster Family
1907
In the collection of the
National Gallery of Ireland





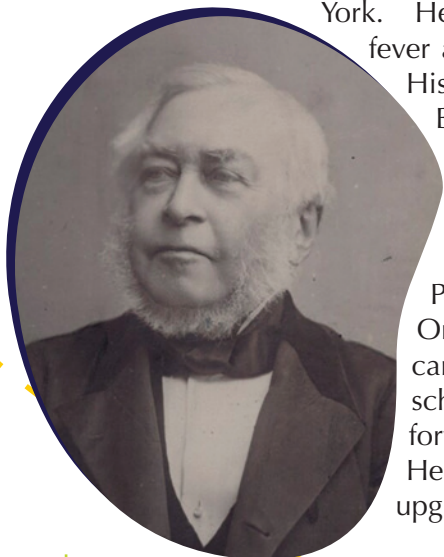
VERE FOSTER

Vere Foster was the first president of the Irish National Teachers Organisation. During his lifetime he did much to better the conditions of those in the teaching profession as well as helping to build and improve more than 2000 schools in Ireland.

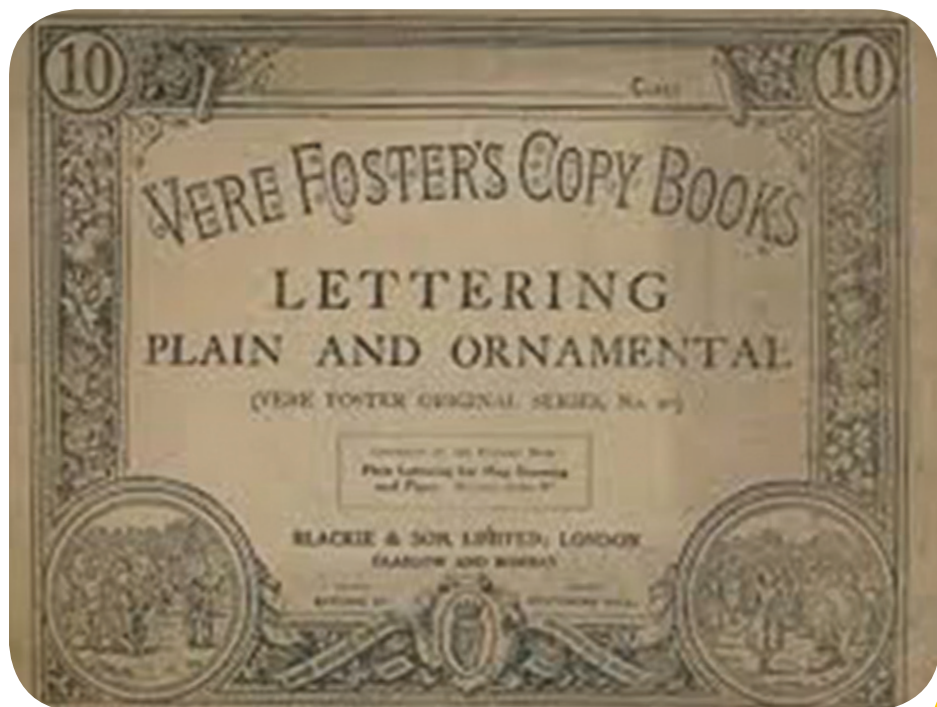
Vere Foster was born in Copenhagen of an Irish-born father. He worked in the UK Diplomatic Corps but left to help the victims of the Great Famine on his brother's estate near Ardee, Co Louth. He founded the Irish Female Emigration Fund in 1852 and helped many young women to emigrate to Canada and Australia. Concerned by reports of the terrible conditions on board, Vere Foster travelled on an emigrant ship to New York. He contracted

fever and remained in hospital there for months. His subsequent campaign in the USA and Britain led to improved conditions for passengers being imposed on the shipping companies.

He helped to found and became the first President of the Irish National Teachers Organisation, travelling throughout the country campaigning for the maintenance of national schools. Education, he considered was the way forward for people wishing to better themselves. He was responsible for the construction or upgrading of around 2000 national schools



throughout the country. He constantly championed the working conditions of teachers and devised cheap but effective schoolbooks which sold in their millions across the world. He donated proceeds from the sale of his copy books towards the cost of the construction of the Royal Victoria hospital in Belfast. For over forty years Vere Foster gave freely of his own finances until he died penniless in a cheap lodging house in Belfast in 1900.



On an island in the centre of our picturesque village, under the shade of a tree, across from the school which was built by him is located an impressive statue immortalising this truly outstanding figure.



IN MEMORY
OF
VERE FOSTER,
BORN APRIL 26TH 1819.
DIED DECEMBER 21ST 1900.

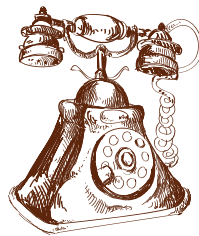
TALLANSTOWN AND REAGHTOWN CHURCH

St. Peter and Pauls Church Tallanstown.

A small t-plan church rendered with limestone dressings originally a single-cell longitudinal church, late 18th century, it was converted to a t-plan in 1830. The interior preserves a good timber Gothic rereads, erected in 1855. Lord and Lady Louth had their own special seat in the church.

Tallanstown Church Railings

The ornamental cast iron railings at the Church in Tallanstown were made about 155 years ago. Originally they were erected around the Governor's garden at Dundalk Prison and they were removed in the 1950's when the garden became a public park. Fr. Downey, the Parish Priest of Tallanstown at the time, had them re-erected at the Church. Every four meters they have a column, which represents "fasces", this was the Roman symbol of "justice". It consists of an axe sheathed in a bundle of rods. The axe represents "punishment for crime". (Incidentally this was the party symbol adopted by Mussolini from which the name "Fascist" derived). Fr. Downey thought it proper to remove the axe heads in front of the church and replace them with decorative cast iron mouldings but they remain along the fence still at the parochial house.



St. Malachys Church Reaghstown

It is a Freestanding gable-fronted Roman Catholic church, built in c. 1830, remodelled 1867 and 1922. The interior with painted with smooth rendered walling, pointed arch reredos, hood moulding with mask stop, recessed round-arched panel with quatrefoil light, stained glass depicting images from Christ's life, a timber gallery to the north. Set within its own grounds, its concrete setting, carved stone cross grave marker to north-east, roughcast rendered boundary walling, smooth rendered coping, square-plan gate piers pyramidal caps, decorative cast-iron railings and gates to north.

It is located on a prominent site, the church acts as a focal point in Reaghstown. Its modest design is enlivened by the skilfully carved stone finials, bellcote and pinnacles, part of the later remodelling of W.H. Byrne. The stained glass particularly that by Miles Kearney & Sons, adds further interest.

TALLANSTOWN OLD GRAVEYARD

Tallanstown's old graveyard has an old Victorian Gothic archway built in 1868. This memorial gateway of high quality stonework leads into a graveyard designed by John Neville. Both Catholics and protestants were buried in Tallanstown graveyard, the graves date from the 1600's. The graveyard contains the Filgate family mausoleum (mausoleum=tomb). The Filgates

were wealthy, well regarded local landowners and land agents. This memorial gateway was it seems erected by the tenants and friends of Thomas William Filgate to commemorate the many good qualities by which he was endeared to them in his life, he died 20/02/1868 aged 49.

Some burials dates are the Rev. Father Patrick Dowdall. (C. 1668-1735) Parish Priest, Cath Roe December 20th, 1734 is the earliest identifiable stone. Laurence Tallon February 19th, 1768, is also buried here.



OLD SCHOOL

The old school is a two-storey detached building next to the Church. It was built in 1840 and was used as a school until 1966. Vere Foster who has links to Tallanstown donated funds to help build the school. It still has the original limestone plaques denoting date built and Female and Male school. A large extension has been added to the original structure with new toilets and kitchen facilities. It is now used as a community hall.

In the 1930s a collection of folklore was compiled by children in the school and can now be viewed online in "The Schools Collection" on the duchar website. An example of a game they played in the school at that time is below but many more can be seen in the collection:



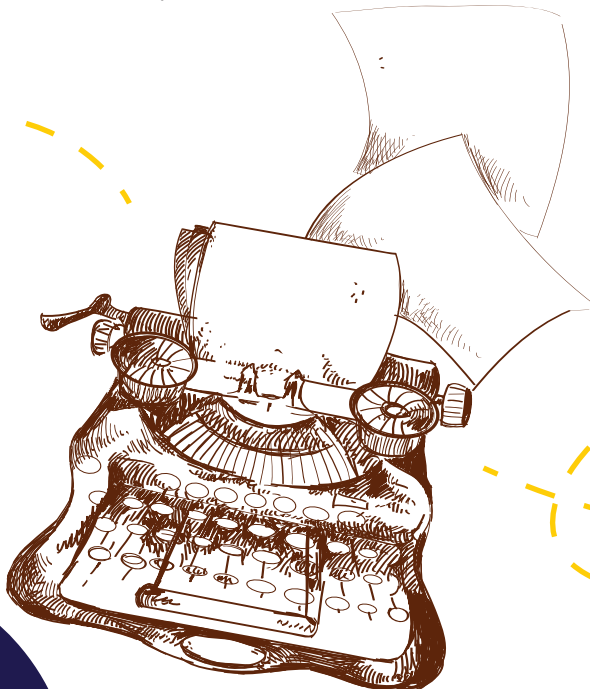
One of the most exciting games we play at school is four corners.

- Five boys play this game.
- Four stones are placed at each corner of a square.
- Four boys stand at t stone each and move from stone to stone.
- If the boy who stands in the middle is quick enough to get position of a stone the boy who looses the stone is then fool in the middle.
- The boy who holds on to a stone wins the game.

Another of the games I play at school is “Stilts”.

- “Stilts” is played by a good number of boys.
- Two sticks are got with steps on them and they are called a pair of stilts.
- You can have the stilts any length you like.
- When starting to walk on stilts first you get small ones.
- Three or four start to gather to walk on the stilts and whichever boy walks the farthest without falling wins the game.

Charlestown school house was a school located close to Tallanstown. It was attended by Church of Ireland and catholic pupils, Roll number is 15774. The parochial school-house containing two large school-rooms each for 60 boys and girls respectively, with suitable apartments for the master and his family. This is now a family house



HISTORICAL POPULATION

- **1837:** According to Samuel Lewis's "A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland," the parish of Tallanstown had a population of 1,074, with 60 residing in the village.
- **1991:** The Central Statistics Office (CSO) recorded the village's population at 439.
- **1996:** Population decreased to 408.
- **2002:** Slight increase to 443.
- **2006:** Significant rise to 653.
- **2011:** Continued growth to 673.

The 10 most common surnames in Tallanstown 1854:

Sharkey - 6 households.

Cunningham - 4 households.

Quin - 4 households.

McCue - 3 households.

Blackwell - 2 households.

Callan - 4 households.

Filgate - 4 households.

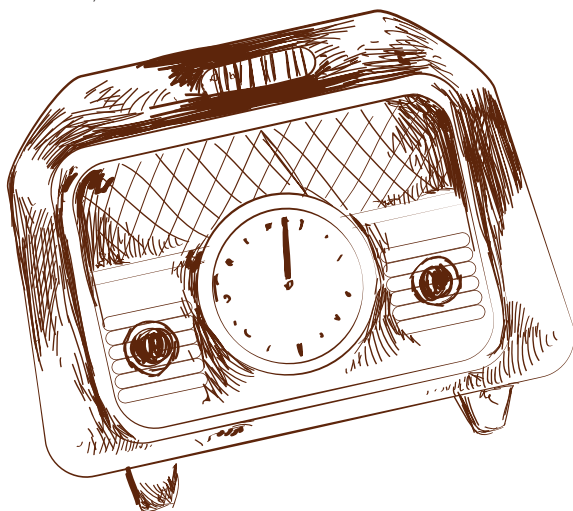
Markey - 3 households.

Thornton - 3 households.

Coleman - 2 households.

Tallanstown Tidy Towns

Tallanstown has an active Tidy Towns committee for the past 41 years. In 2010, Tallanstown gained national recognition by winning Ireland's National Tidy Towns competition, reflecting the community's commitment to enhancing their village. Tallanstown also represented Ireland in Entente Floral 2008 and Communities in Bloom, 2011.



GLYDE RANGERS

Around the year 1896 there were two teams in Louth called the Glyde Rangers – one in Tallanstown and the other in Castlebellingham. In the Tallanstown tournament held in Mrs. McMahon's field at Springhill on the 31st March 1896, the Tallanstown Glyde Rangers defeated the Castlebellingham Glyde Rangers 1-6 to 1-1. After their victory Tallanstown claimed the name of the Glyde Rangers.

Up to around the beginning of the 1930s none other than Lord Louth played host to the club. He provided a field known as the Chapel field on which many matches were played and another field of his known only as "the Park" was used almost exclusively for practicing. In later years, a field known as Gernon's field which was situated along the Glyde, was used not only for football matches but for sports meetings and any other events taking place in the area. In fact the first Senior football match played by the Glyde Rangers was played in Gernon's field in 1930.

The present Glyde Rangers can certainly be traced from their beginning way back in 1925. This team was made up mostly of locals who came together to form a team called Tallanstown. They won their one and only Senior Championship in 1934, when they defeated Wolfe Tones of Drogheda in the county final by 1-03 to 0-04.

In 1962 the club first acquired the field from the McMahon family of Churchpark, it was located beside the hall which was used for dressing purposes, etc and it was also in close proximity to the village. In 1978 at the first committee meeting the development of the club pitch was discussed, and the pitch had its first game of football played on it in May 1979.

Ladies

Founded in 2008 Glyde Rangers Ladies began with only a small squad of players for an U12 team and could never have predicted the success they would come to experience in such a short time. Since it began the club now has a fantastic squad of ladies playing U10, U12 and U14. They had their first ladies' team in 2013 and went on to win the Junior B championship in 2013. They won the division 3 league in 2015 and Junior Championship 2024.

VERE FOSTER MEMORIAL SCHOOL TALLANSTOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL PRESENT DAY

In a break from the norm, the primary school in Tallanstown is not named in honour of a saint, but rather the title bestowed upon the school is "Vere Foster Memorial School". There are only two schools in Ireland called after Vere Foster Tallanstown and Vere Foster Primary school in Belfast (1963-2011). Vere Foster memorial school is situated in the village of Tallanstown about five miles from the town of Ardee, County Louth. The family seat of Vere Foster, Glyde Court (now in ruins) lies about 2 miles from the village and our school is now named in his honour. The original school, which was built in 1840 and closed in 1966, is now a community centre. Our present school though much extended and modernised was constructed in 1966. In 1969 two outlying parish schools Aclint and Stormonstown NS were amalgamated with Tallanstown. Aclint NS is now a community centre though Stormanstown NS is derelict. Currently we have 285 pupils, a mainstream teaching staff of thirteen teachers, four full-time SET teachers, a base school for two supply panel teachers, a secretary, caretaker and cleaner.



Facilities

We currently have twelve classrooms, three SET rooms and two offices. We also have a hall for P.E, a large playing field, three basketball courts and a Zen Den, which is a sensory area for people to relax and recharge. In 2024 the school erected an outdoor learning area and a polytunnel.

Achievements/Sports

The school has successfully achieved eight Green School flags, an Amber Flag, Active Flag and are currently working on Gael Bratach. Children have an opportunity to play gaelic football, hurling, soccer, basketball, rugby and for which we run competitions in school and take part in competitions outside school. Children also get a chance to take part in yoga, swimming, dance and Music Generation.

Tallanstown Montessori is located on the same grounds as our school. It caters for children from three years old to school age. It opened in 2014 and is run by Laura and Joan who are amazing with the children. It is a mixed school and they take up to twenty two children every day.

THE SCHOOL BAND

Tallanstown National School had a school band consisting of around 30 children. The instruments they played were a big drum, tin whistles and accordians. They wore white skirts and trousers and a blue cape and hat. From 1995 – 1997 Mrs. Flynn and Mrs. McCabe organised the band. The band took part in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade in Ardee every year. They walked from the Fairgreen to the Church carrying banners that bore the message "Vere Foster School Band". In the 1995 – 1996 school year the Sunday Games presenter came to the school and the band played the Sunday Games music. The band practiced during the school holidays and there were also majorettes. The band also played in the May Day Parade on May the 1st in Dundalk. Young children often started in the band as majorette, and played instruments when they got older.



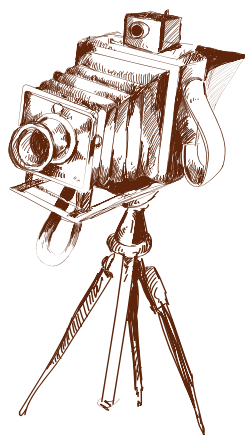
MAGUIRE PARK

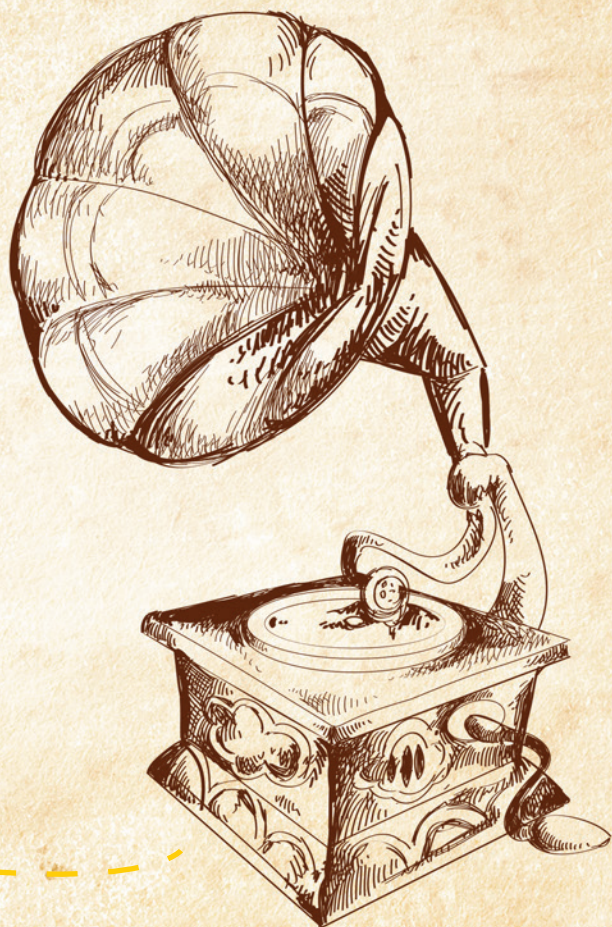
The Park named in memory of May Maguire and the Maguire Family whose generous bequest to the parish of Tallanstown enabled the creation of the park.

The Mount and Maguire Park was opened by Seamus Kirk TD on 16th June 2000. The Mount may have been the remains of a Motte and Bailey but is more likely to have been one of a series of a man made lookout towers that stretch across the county towards the Cooly Peninsula.

In years gone by it was the location for the local "Patron" held annually on the 29th of June. This event attracted visitors from far and wide and was a source of great entertainment to all present. The Mount now forms part of the delightfully designed Amenity Park, where visitors can "tarry awhile".

The community of Tallanstown are very grateful to have this amenity in our local area.







The following are the names of the boys and girls who worked very hard on various aspects of the project along with their teacher Mrs Evonne Hanratty.

Introduction: Cian

Louth Hall: Ciaran, Cathal and Luke

Glyde Court: Amelia, Eleanor and Xena

Old School: Nastia, Sophie and Aoibhinn

New School: D.J, Liam, Cillian and Joseph

School band: D.J

Graveyard: Cian, Rory and Paraic

Maguire Park: Kate

The Church: Kate and Laura

Glyde Football: Evan, Charlie and Harry

Vere Foster: Cillian, Joseph and Liam