

LISNASKEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**MOAT RING OR CORNASHEE, COUNTY FERMANAGH**

This site that local people call “The Moat Ring” because of its shape is also called Cornashee which means “Hill of the Fairies” and “Skeagoura” which means “Assembly of the White Mare” or “Assembly of the Shield” or “Assembly of the White Thorn”. All are possible translations because this was where the Maguire Chieftain was inaugurated and the white mare as well as the shield and the white thorn were intrinsic to these ceremonies. This is also where Lisnaskea gets its name!

The mound is about 32 metres in diameter and topped with the flattened platform of small stones; the photographs do not do it justice! Under the mound is probably a prehistoric grave-site with kerb-stones around the circumference but the only archaeological research has had to be non intrusive and the geophysical results were inconclusive because of the density of the mound. However it was surely a very important place in ancient culture and there are a number of similar sites around Lisnaskea dating from 3,000-4,000 years ago.

To mark 400 years after the Flight of the Earls in 1607 the Lisnaskea Historical Society arranged a re-enactment of the crowning of the Maguire Donn Carragh Maguire by the O'Neill from Tyrone their overlords. Four local schools took part and Enniskillen Museum provided the Maguire emblem and the chieftain's costumes. The bard was played by Seamus Mc Canny and the Chief Herald by John Reihill. The sounds carried far from the height of the mound and the visibility was so good that five counties, including Fermanagh, could be seen from the top.

**Directions:** This site can be found from a mini-roundabout by the Spar shop at Main Street, Lisnaskea. If coming from Maguiresbridge or Brookeborough, turn left at this mini-roundabout, drive up the very steep hill to the summit and turn right at the T -junction; the Moat Ring is clearly seen on the right just after this point.

**Victoria Herbert**