

## HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

### ANTRIM AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



#### HOLYWELL HOSPITAL

Holywell Hospital is situated on high ground two miles north of Antrim on the Steeple Road. In 1891 the Holywell site of 100 acres was selected as the location for a County Antrim Lunatic Asylum. Built primarily to alleviate serious overcrowding at the Belfast Asylum it provided a separate asylum for Country Antrim and was opened in 1898. One of the last large asylums built by the Victorians, it was designed by architect John Lanyon. The building of the vast hospital did not go smoothly with the Board of Governors and Lanyon, who died in 1900, in frequent dispute with the contractors over costs and missed deadlines. The hospital's prominent features include the Clock Tower and the gargoyles at the front entrance. The Clock Tower was lit at night and used by boaters on Lough Neagh as a guide to the mouth of the Six Mile Water. A fire in 1930 destroyed a large section of the hospital. Later, during the Second World War, the American troops were stationed in the grounds. Holywell Hospital continues to treat the mentally ill and its long history charts the developments in psychiatric care over the past 110 years.