

Hidden Gems and Forgotten People
LISBURN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



LAKEVIEW

The ancestral home of John Ballance, Premier of New Zealand 1891-1893 at Glenavy near Lisburn, Co Antrim.

Following the publication of a biography of Mr John Balance by Mr Timothy McIvor, it was discovered that the actual house in which he had been brought up in was derelict. A group of enthusiasts got together to restore the building. The present Mr Ballance gave the Ulster New Zealand Trust a 40-year lease on the property. Funding was sought from a variety of bodies. Work started in 1986 and Lady Bloomfield opened the renovated house on 13th June 1991. The New Zealand Rugby Team replanted the orchard when they came to play Ireland in November 1989. Part of the renovated house is devoted to a museum featuring the career and achievements of John Ballance while the contribution of Ulster people to the colonization of New Zealand is also recognised. There is now a tea barn and a large exhibition or conference area as well as a large reference library dealing with a variety of New Zealand topics. The Honorary Consul for New Zealand has her official office at the Ballance House. The house is open to the public on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons from April until September.