



TULLYGLASS

— HOTEL AND RESIDENCES —

A History



The History

A rich history steeped in Irish horse racing and whiskey production.

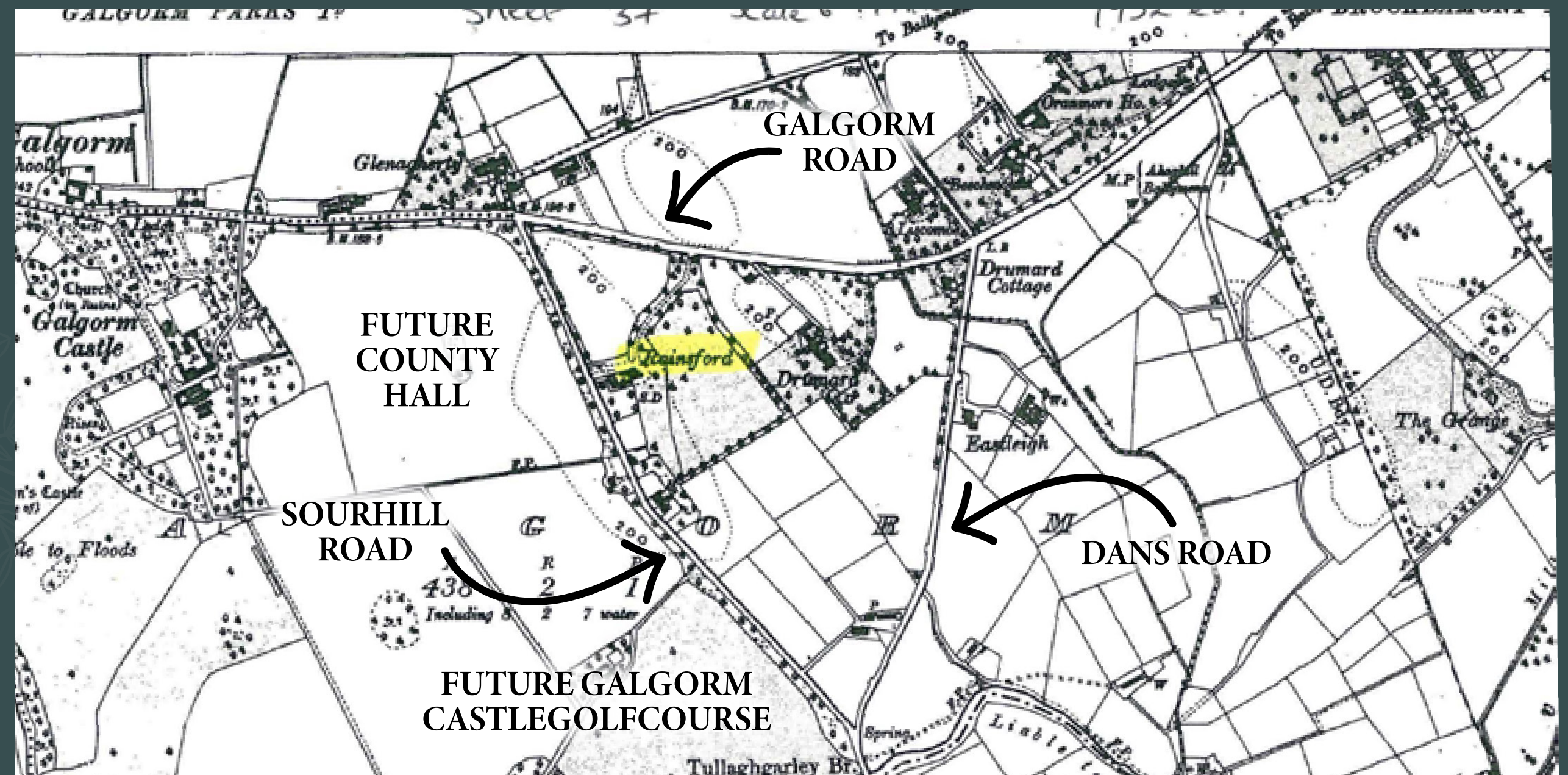
Known locally as ‘The Tullyglass,’ our hotel and its surrounding lands have a rich and interesting history spanning almost 300 years.

From early connections with the formation of the Irish horse racing circuit during the 18th century, through playing an important part of local whiskey production in the 19th and 20th centuries, to serving the wider community in it's current role, our hotel has a story which has fascinated many of our guests.

In order to build upon the many anecdotes about ‘The Tullyglass’ and how it evolved, we have researched the history of the lands, the building and its residents. We trust that this will provide you with some of the sense of history that we feel working here every day.

Land Registry Map 1932

This map shows the boundary line of the Rainsford Property



1880– 1910 Hugh Rainey

A brief history as part of the local community, dating back to the 19th century and before.

Hugh Rainey is noted in public records as the original builder of The Tullyglass (originally known as Rainsford House). He is therefore a starting point for our research.

The first reference that we found to Hugh Rainey recorded him as “a Dealer in Provisions”, based at 56 Church Street, Ballymena. He appears to have prospered and also re-invested in his community, buying land in the surrounding area as his wealth grew. Amongst other purchases, he bought lands in the Clonavon area, which at that time was outside Ballymena town, not far from The Braid River. This extended to the site where he would ultimately build his home.



At that time the area was undeveloped, long before the current housing was built and the area became absorbed into the town itself

Hugh Rainey also had an altruistic side, and this was demonstrated on the Clonavon lands, where our research suggests that he both gave a site, and paid for the construction of the little church, which can still be seen in Clonavon Terrace.

As his success in business continued, in approximately 1879 Hugh Rainey commissioned a grand ‘Gentleman’s Residence’ which he named Rainsford House, this was built toward the edge of the Clonavon lands. He lived in the house from 1880 to 1910 and it was the next owners who were to rename it Tullyglass House.

Amongst other acquisitions, Hugh Rainey developed an interest in horses and racing, initially using some of his lands as paddocks and eventually also purchasing the racecourse at Raceview near Broughshane (noted to be unusual at the time for being fully turfed and consequently being widely recognised throughout Ireland as “an excellent track”.

Through this developing interest, Hugh had large stables built beside his home, where he kept his thoroughbred and half-breed horses for breeding and racing.

Horse racing had actually taken place in the Ballymena area from the early eighteenth century and our research unearthed the fact that in 1751 the freeholders of the Braid River commissioned a “very fine silver cup’ from a Dublin silversmith, and this was presented for one of the more prestigious races held annually at the Raceview track. The cup is still in the district, in private hands.

Horse racing continued at Raceview into the early Twentieth Century, but by then it appears that the course did not comply with the regulations of newly formed governing bodies in the equestrian world and thus, races would be called ‘flapping meetings’ run ‘outside the rules.’ The site today has been fully developed to incorporate a much larger industry. The Michelin tyre factory is located where the track once stood.

As Hugh Rainey grew older, he eventually sold his home to the well- known locally McAllister family but, curiously, his involvement unexpectedly reappeared almost 100 years later.

When The Tullyglass was being renovated by us in late 1994, during some excavation work several original racing saddles and a jockey’s whip were unearthed and these are currently displayed beside the hotel’s reception area.



1910–1953

Mr & Mrs J.B. McAllister

James McAllister acquired Rainsford House in the late 19th Century, renaming it Tullyglass House. He was a rich entrepreneur from the Glens of Antrim and had amassed a fortune in the local whiskey trade as a distiller, bottler and bonder.

For those of you from overseas, Irish distilled whiskey has always had an extra ‘e’ in its spelling, compared with its rival whisky which is distilled in Scotland.

James McAllister was innovative both in terms of developing his range of products and also in its marketing. In the days before television he used advertising from the mirrors used in public houses to posters placed at prominent locations, in order to attract potential customers. Amongst his stable of whiskey brands, the most famous was ‘Clan Colla’ which, unusually for a local distiller, was widely exported in the early 1900s to America and the rest of the world.

When James married he made Tullyglass House his long term home. Our research suggests that he entertained not only friends and family but also business clients and politicians from across the world (again with an eye to marketing), using both the luxurious lounge and grand dining room which our research suggests, were widely considered to be outstanding in the area. One can only image how lavish the parties must have been!

During our renovations of the original part of the buildings we have tried to sympathetically retain architectural features, some of the original services pulleys (used to move food and other items between floors) and manually operated calling bells (used to summon servants) can be seen in the original bedrooms.

To celebrate this phase of the hotel’s ownership, we have also acquired some memorabilia related to the McAllister business, and this has been placed throughout the hotel.

Such items have become collector’s items in their own right, not only in Ireland, but also North America where the brands James McAllister developed have still not been forgotten.

“A grand old
drop from
Ballymena
pot still”



Family Label

Supporting the visual advertising, he also developed memorable straplines for his products, again a marketing technique well ahead of his time. 'A grand old drop from Ballymena pot still. Distilled three times to give you that smooth distinctive Irish taste'.

The hotel's primary water source is a well some 500ft below and the water percolates through volcanic basalt rock and is credited by our local authority as being one of the purest water sources in the Province. This is the water we serve to our customers perhaps it was also one of the secrets behind James McAllister's world famous whiskey?

More recently, partly to recognise some of the history of this era of the hotel, a selection of Rare and Vintage Whiskeys are available to sample at our bars.



Inventory Documentation

31st March 1942

Towards the end of his life in the early 1940s because James McAllister and his wife had no children he left his entire estate to his nephews. In turn they decided to sell the business and estate, along with its entire inventory.

The brand itself was acquired by a subsidiary of Guinness, but has now fallen from use.

Our research into this part of the history of The Tullyglass was bolstered by the discovery of two documents, dated 31 March 1942, covering the inventory and its valuation. These were found on the premises and were produced for Sotheby's Auctions of London. The documents remain in the hotel's possession and can be viewed on our website.

The total value of just the clothing owned by Mr and Mrs McAllister at that time, if indexed, would amount to a staggering £80,000 today. Perhaps 'Tullyglass House' was the local Downtown Abbey of its day? Just one notable item was 'a long mink coat 'of the finest quality', by Reviere, valued at £250 - worth £11,500 today.



MRS. M'ALLISTER'S CLOTHING.

Long mink coat of finest quality, by Reviere.	250.	0
Dyed ermine coat.	120.	0
Squirrel coat.	60.	0
Fine musquash coat, by Reviere.	120.	0
Leopard skin coat.	60.	0
Black coat, lined with musquash.	60.	0
Evening dresses.	100.	0
Food costumes, and wearing dresses.	150.	0
Under-clothing.	60.	0
Stockings.	20.	0
Boots and shoes.	60.	0
Other items, including waterproofs.	25.	0
	<u>£1,110.</u>	

MR. M'ALLISTER'S CLOTHING.

Lounge suits, various, and others.	100.
Two evening dress suits, and two dinner suits.	50.
Overcoats.	60.
Boots and shoes.	45.
Shirts, socks, underwear, etc.	60.
	<u>£315.</u>



Tullyglass House 1940

Rainsford originally, now Tullyglass House
Early photograph from the local paper describing the
change of name

The Intervening Years 1953 – 1993

The property changed ownership privately several times over the next forty years. Notable owners included the O’Kane family (known for successfully developing large scale commercial chicken production and processing, O’Kane chickens were sold throughout the British Isles. That business is now Brazilian owned, with products going even further afield.

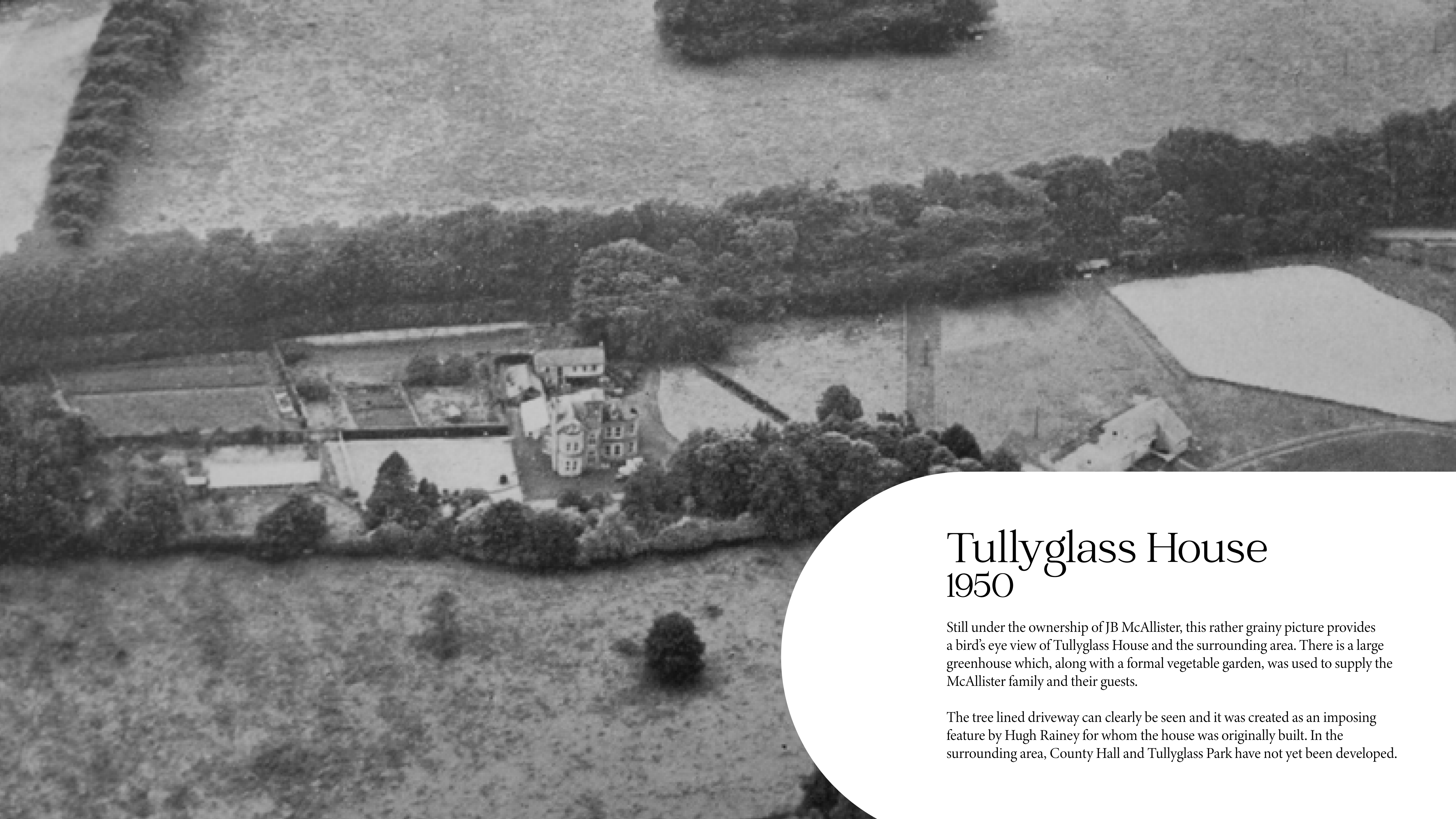
After this, the building was purchased by the O’Mullan family initially from the Cloughmills area, John O’Mullan was an entrepreneur who carried out numerous housing contracts, constructing on average 200 houses per year. Large local housing projects completed include Ballee, Ballykeel, Doury Road, Dunclug, Deramore, Rectory Estate.

The property was then purchased by the Walker family, local entrepreneurs who developed The Country Garage, a franchised supplier of BMW cars, along with other extensive property interests.

Lastly and perhaps ‘squaring the circle’ from horses to hotels, we note that the McLarnon family owned the property until 1993. They were hoteliers with an interest in horse racing - and saw the potential to develop Tullyglass House firstly as a guest house and then later as a successful nightclub, their most famous horse was ‘Beef or Salmon’ which won The Hennessy Gold Cup on three occasions.



O’Mullan Family Portrait 1956
John (wearing the hat) & Patricia O’Mullan along with their three daughters



Tullyglass House 1950

Still under the ownership of JB McAllister, this rather grainy picture provides a bird's eye view of Tullyglass House and the surrounding area. There is a large greenhouse which, along with a formal vegetable garden, was used to supply the McAllister family and their guests.

The tree lined driveway can clearly be seen and it was created as an imposing feature by Hugh Rainey for whom the house was originally built. In the surrounding area, County Hall and Tullyglass Park have not yet been developed.



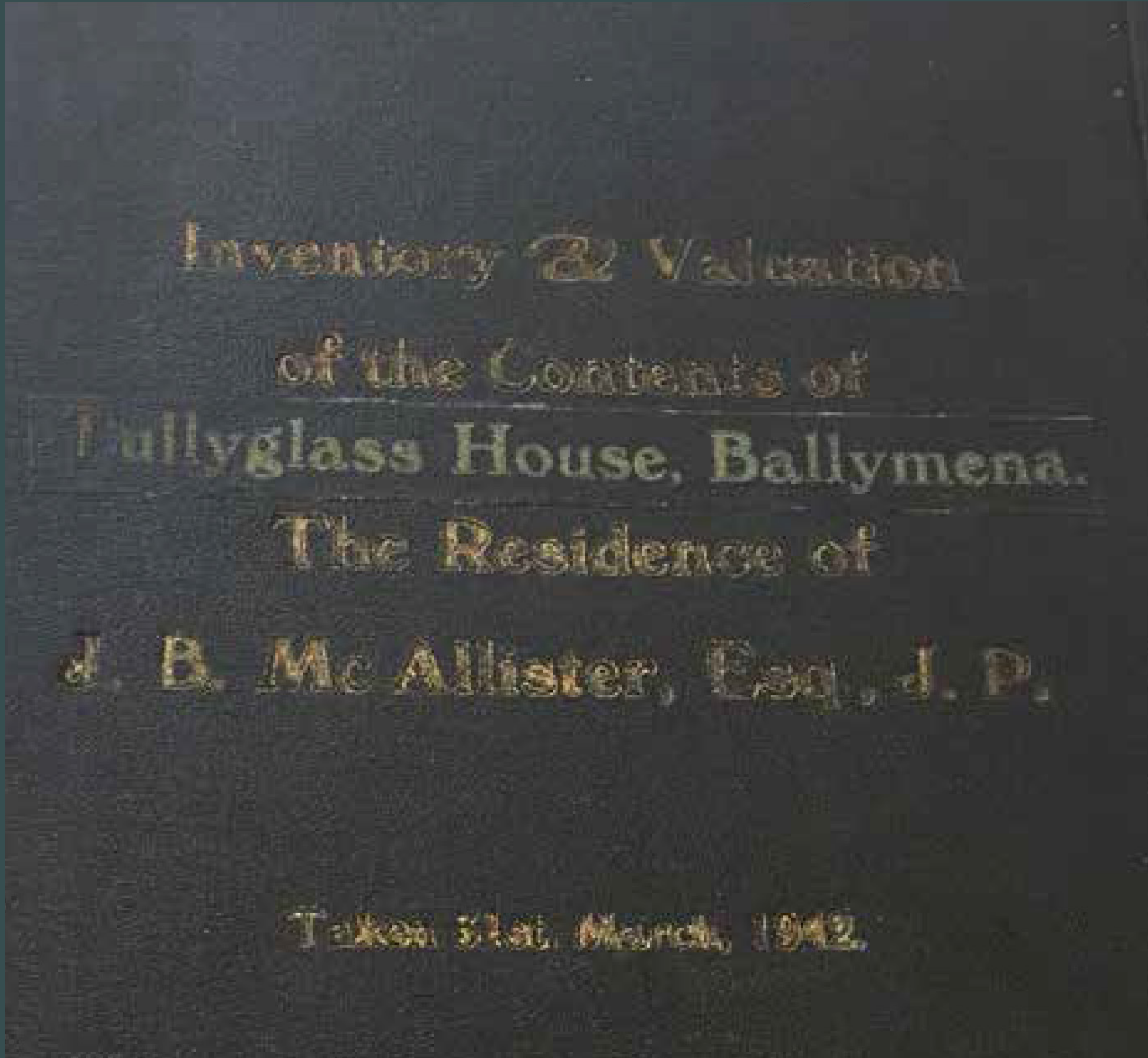
Tullyglass 1960

This picture best presents the house in its original form and little has changed from the late 1800s. The original house stands proud with the racing stables to the rear.



Inventory & Valuation Documentation

This document was prepared shortly after the Blitz of Belfast in 1942.



MRS. M'ALLISTER'S DRESSING ROOM.

Old Sheraton inlaid mahogany wardrobe with two glazed doors; moulded and carved cornice, and bracket feet (doors have under sunken inlaid panels). 4ft 1in. x 7ft 2ins.			
Antique mahogany washstand, with compartment; moulded tapering legs; 14ins. x 14ins.	40.	0.	0.
Old Chippendale mahogany chest of drawers; two small and three under drawers; drop handles; 2ft 2ins. x 2ft.	3.	0.	0.
Antique inlaid mahogany table piano as dressing table, with three small under drawers and fluted tapering legs; 5ft 8ins.	14.	0.	0.
Rare old Sheraton inlaid mahogany mirror with oval glass and three small bow-fronted drawers; ivory mounts.	12.	0.	0.
Rare old Sheraton inlaid mahogany folding card table, with shaped front and taper legs; polished surface; 3ft.	10.	0.	0.
Georgian gilt overmantel with fluted columns and panelled mirror, surmounted by fluted cornice; 4ft x 1ft 10ins.	15.	0.	0.
Inlaid satinwood desk, with fall front and wide under drawer; four tapering legs; 2ft 6ins. x 3ft 6ins.	10.	0.	0.
Small old Sheraton inlaid mahogany card table, with two fall panels revealing green cloth-covered writing surface; small under drawer; four tapering legs with stretchers; 1ft 6ins. x 1ft 6ins.	20.	0.	0.
Chippendale style mahogany armchair with open fiddle back, shaped arms and fluted square legs with under-stretchers; upholstered seat.	12.	0.	
Old Chippendale mahogany armchair with shaped interlaced scroll back; cabriole legs with carved knees and pad feet; upholstered seat covered with silk tapestry.	20.	0.	
Old Hepplewhite chair, with open fiddle shaped back and tapering legs with stretchers; upholstered seat.	6.	0.	
			162.





Tullyglass House 1988

**A view towards the Tullyglass House from the original
drive off the Galgorm Road**

Early photograph from the local paper describing the
change of name.

1993 – Present

The McConville Family

In 1980 Kathleen Taggart, a teacher, married Chris McConville, an antiques dealer and property developer. In the next year they bought The O'Neill Arms Hotel in nearby Toomebridge, starting a path that eventually led them to The Tullyglass.

Kathleen's family had a very successful farming background, farming some 390 acres in the early 30s. Seventy percent of their farm produce was flax which was in high demand during the World Wars. By 1935, her prosperous uncles bought The O'Neill Arms Hotel.

Under the ownership of the Taggart family, the hotel was developed successfully, weathering the depression of the 1930s and playing a prominent role during World War II as the headquarters for the American Air Force Officers. The American Air crews flew from airfields that were constructed at Toomebridge and nearby Ardboe, with the hotel becoming their 'home from home.'

To supply the hotel, as was the practice at the time the Taggart brothers bonded and distilled their own whiskey and also bottled local beer on the premises (an antique glass whiskey dispenser from the period can be viewed at reception in The Tullyglass).

The whiskey they bottled carried Arthur Taggart's name and was very popular with American aircrew, ground crew and GIs, and it was also supplied to the House of Commons during the war. It is quite possible that Sir Winston Churchill could have sampled the Taggart skills, either in London or indeed closer to home, as he owned Garron Tower on the Antrim Coast during that period. As a child, before it was sold, Kathleen worked in her uncle's hotel and saw what was required to run a hotel and keep customers satisfied, something she carried through into her working life. When she qualified as a teacher, she developed the skills which would enable her to train staff and impress upon them the need to ensure high levels of customer service and satisfaction.



After their marriage in 1980, Chris and Kathleen bought back and renovated The O'Neill Arms and built up a strong local business, not fully recognising at the time, that this would serve as a template for their later development of The Tullyglass.

They expanded the hotel and later developed a nightclub, which in the late 1980s and 1990's was attracting more than 1,000 patrons, again honing their skills in different aspects of the business.

In 1990, they saw another opportunity and bought what was to become The Tumbledown Bar in Moneyglass, bringing this from a derelict building to a thriving business over a period of almost 20 years. In 1993, Tullyglass House was placed on the market. It was viewed by Chris and Kathleen McConville who saw the beauty and potential of the original building.

Immediately recognising the potential that they could unlock, so they bought it.

The Tullyglass was a perfect 'next step' in their evolving strategy which had illustrated that a properly run hotel is a very satisfying business.



Chris and Kathleen McConville
A photograph of the couple at a family wedding in 2004

Family Whiskey Dispenser 1930

The label displays Arthur's association with bottling and bonding whiskey within the hotel in those early days. A vintage bottle of the same product from the same period sells for up to £3000 in today's fine spirit market, a testament to the fine brewing of the time.



COLERAINE TAYLOR'S 10
YEAR OLD IRISH H.C.

Dist. 180000

750 (40%)

First Single Malt Whiskey

DETAILS

TASTE

A historic bottle of our whiskey, the
bottle of 10-year-old Taylor's H.C. is
called because it was made for the House
of Commons and produced in the
Coleraine Distillery in, we estimate, the
1800s.



£2,999

incl. VAT

1

ADD TO BASKET

WINE TO REQUEST

WINE TO REQUEST

WINE TO REQUEST

WINE TO REQUEST

WINE TO REQUEST

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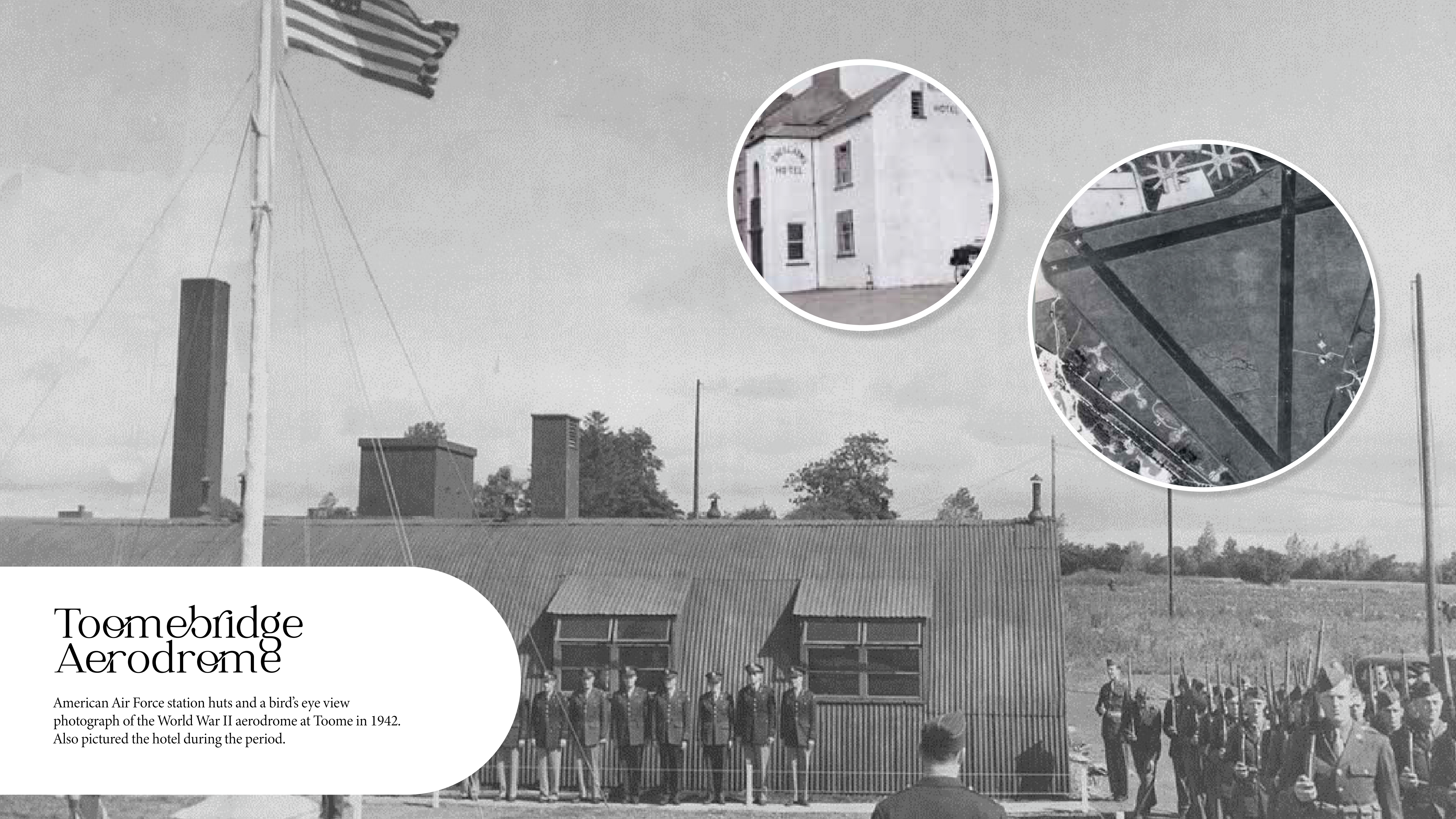
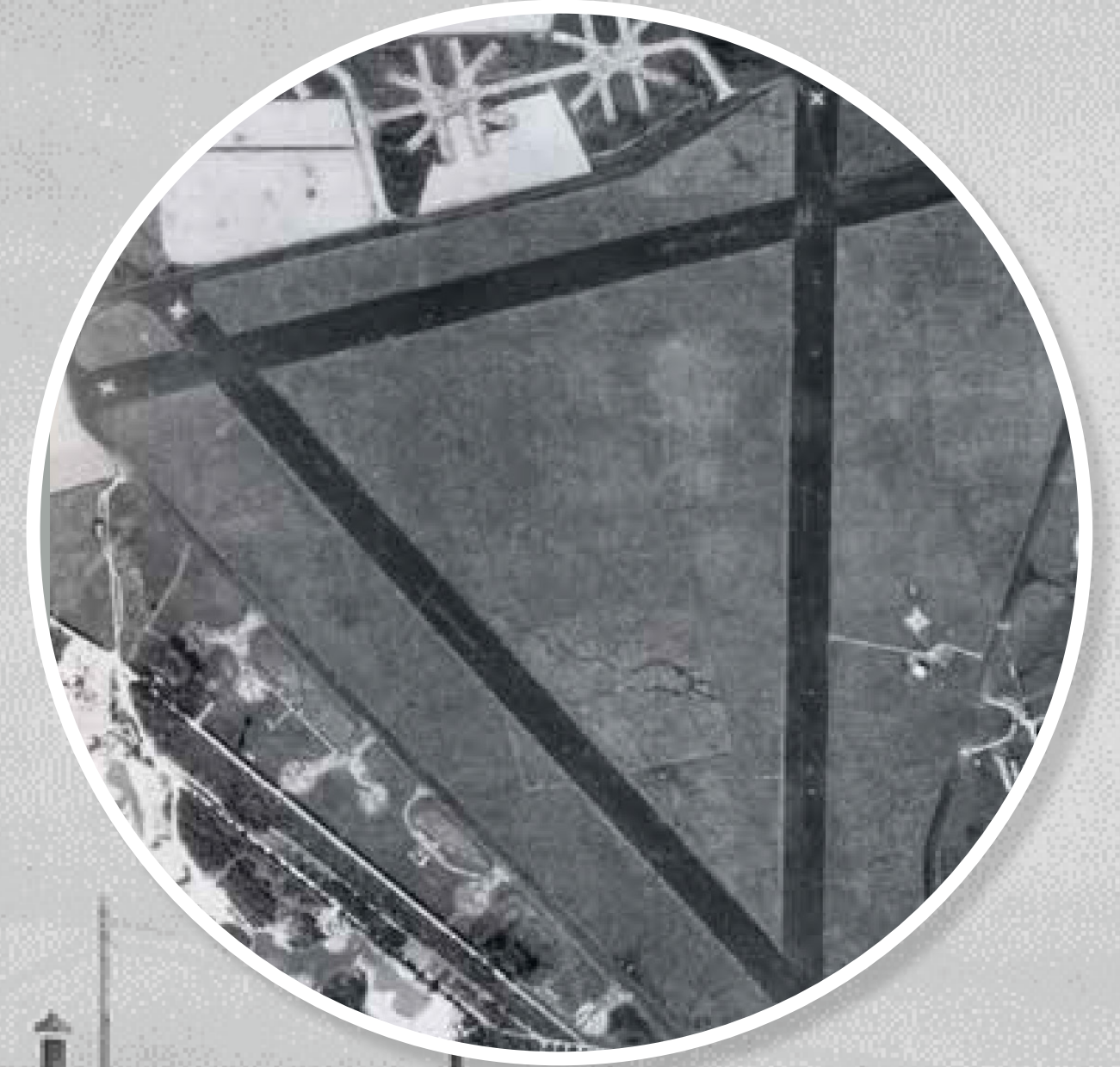
WINE TO REQUEST

WINE TO REQUEST



Toomebridge Aerodrome

American Air Force station huts and a bird's eye view photograph of the World War II aerodrome at Toome in 1942. Also pictured the hotel during the period.





The O'Neill Arms Hotel 1983

An early photograph of the O'Neill Arms Hotel before the expansion of the successful Arby's nightclub to the rear, also a photograph of Arby's being developed in 1985 and an advert of the logo from that period.



Original Front Entrance
1989



Original Rear Entrance
1989

Tumbledown Bar 1990

Tumbledown as Chris and Kathleen acquired it in 1989. The main image displays an aerial photograph of the new bar renovated and opened in 1990.

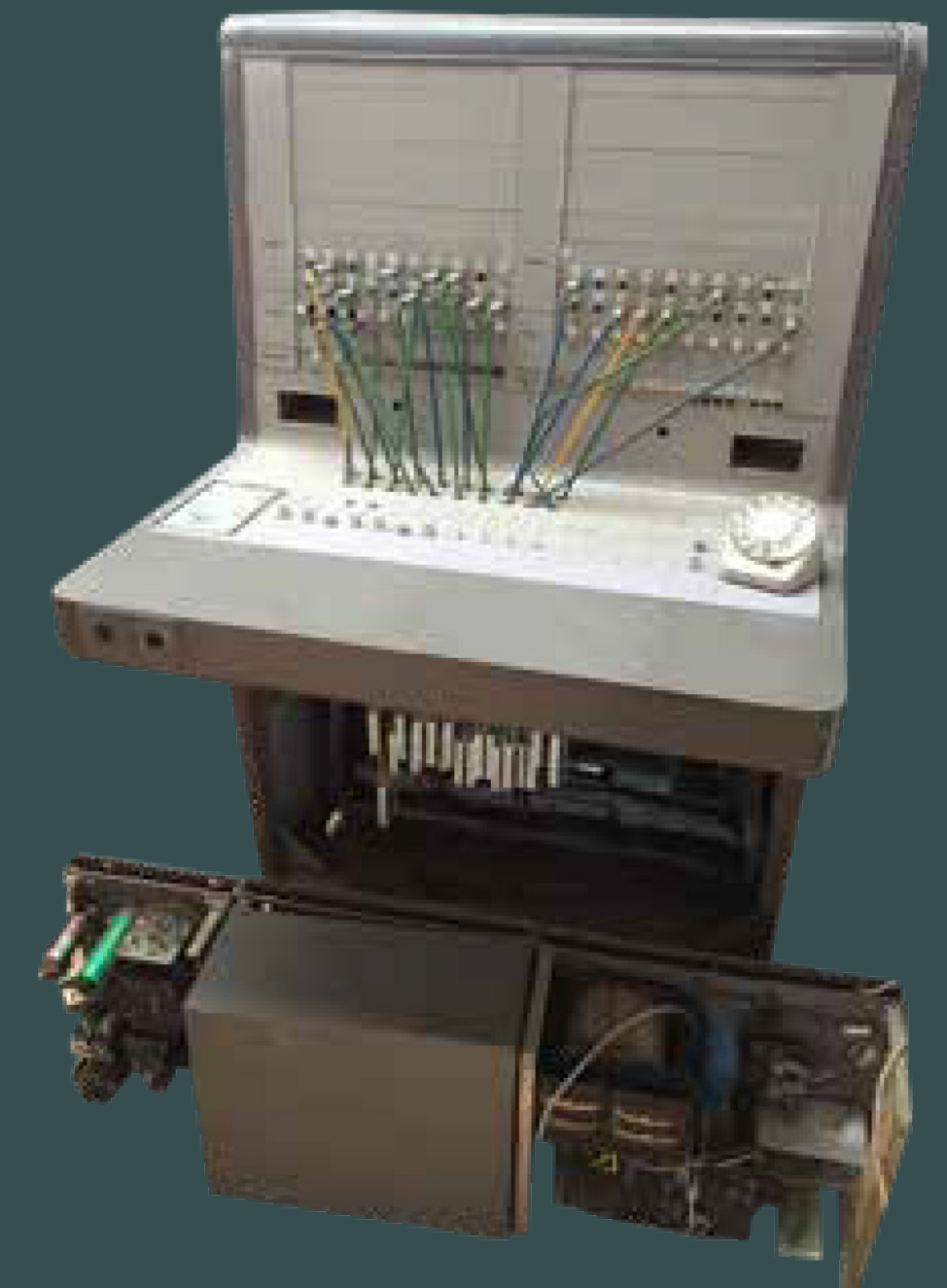
Back to the Tullyglass

Chris and Kathleen considered that the location of hotel was convenient for both local users and visiting guests, whilst their track record of offering high quality with value for money would add a commercial dimension to the business.

Since acquiring The Tullyglass in 1993, Chris and Kathleen have embarked on a long-term investment programme, continually moving the business forward and re-investing profits, even during periods when the economic outlook in Northern Ireland was less than positive.

Included within their strategy was the decision to invest in management and staff that would “be there for the long-term” and enhance the overall experience; giving consistency and a “familiar face” to repeat customers. This personal touch has been an essential part of bringing life and vibrancy back into The Tullyglass.

Thus, a strong team has been established and the McConville family has continued to maintain their position at the helm. Currently the hotel is managed by Chris and Kathleen’s son Gus. The original building was soon outgrown as The Tullyglass became more popular, so over a number of years, the original building has been sympathetically renovated and extended, wherever possible retaining original architectural features. Other additions have also been made adjacent to the original house to cater for customer demands and expectations. Particular milestones include an initial investment in 1995 of some £4.5 million which included the majority of the current bedroom stock and a large conservatory, added to facilitate a carvery and allow the running of several events.



In 2005, a multi-purpose function room called the Clocktower Suite was added at a cost of some £5 million, which allows business events and conferences to be held in tandem because of the flexibility of its design.

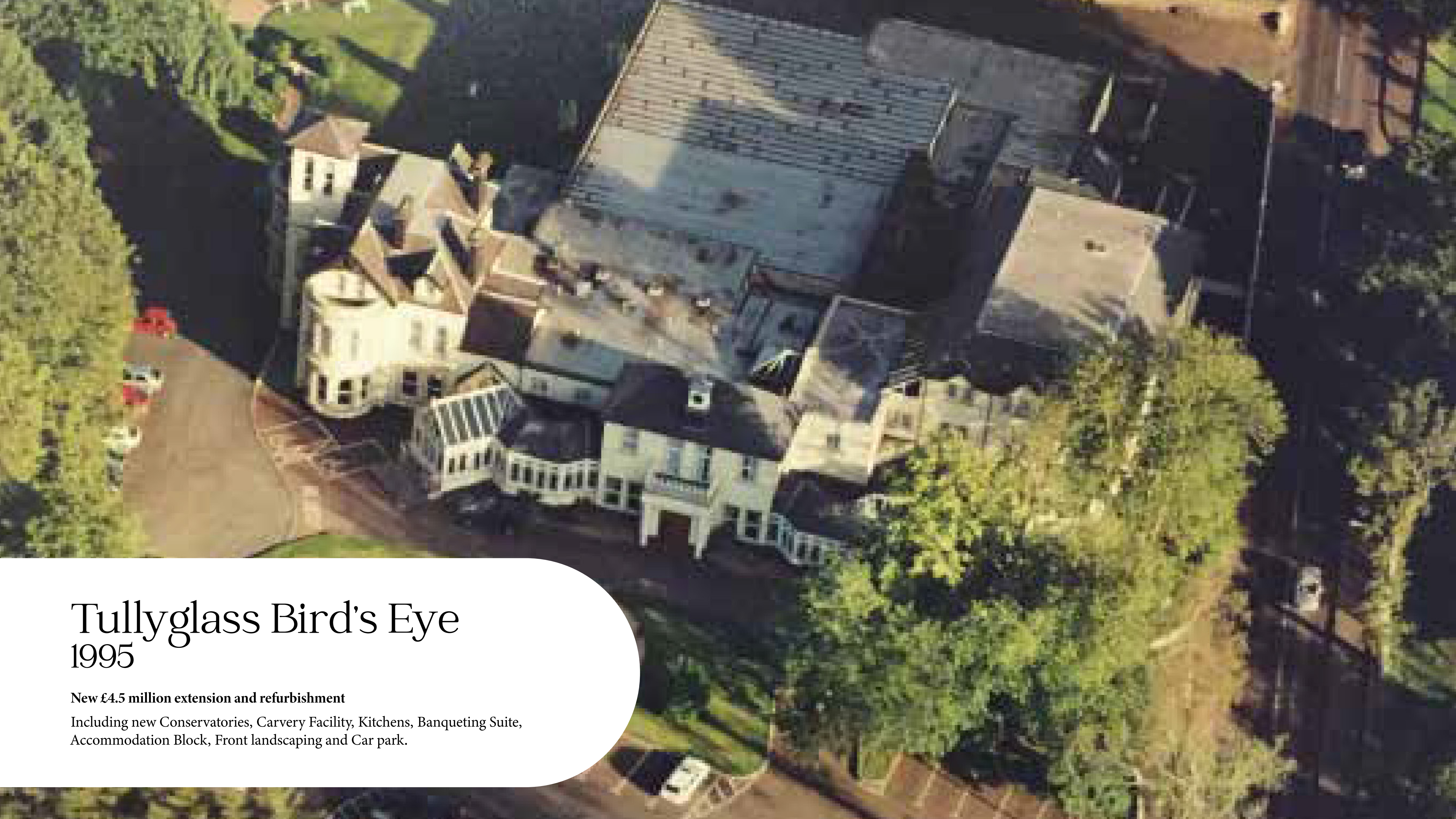
On the other hand, if the entire function room is opened up, it can handle events for more than 1800 guests.

More recently, more than £2 million has been invested buying land and buildings around the hotel which has facilitated the development of extensive car parking, new gardens and general landscaping to complement the standard of the rooms inside.

The hotel has become a particularly popular venue, offering everything from fine dining and special events, to business and other conferences, whilst many weddings have also been celebrated at The Tullyglass.

Plans are already in place for the next stage of development, the growing numbers of tourists to Northern Ireland and a great central location around some of the norths best attractions means that we need more bedrooms, and so the story continues...





Tullyglass Bird's Eye 1995

New £4.5 million extension and refurbishment

Including new Conservatories, Carvery Facility, Kitchens, Banqueting Suite, Accommodation Block, Front landscaping and Car park.

THE NEWLY REFURBISHED TULLYGLASS HOUSE HOTEL NOW OPEN

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WITH MAXIMUM PRICES FOR THE
PLANNING AND DESIGN SERVICE

Sample hospitality

ETHER your visit is for business or pleasure, guests can expect a traditionally warm and friendly welcome at Ballymena's Tullyglass Hotel.

Formerly a country residence, Tullyglass was built in 1890 and is now owned by the McConville family who have lovingly converted the imposing building to its former splendour, recreating the atmosphere and decor of years gone by.

Many smaller rooms and a large ballroom are within easy reach of the hotel.

These include the large ballroom which is ideal for all social occasions, from the formal to the informal, and the large bar and lounge which is ideal for all social occasions.

In fact, the entire building is ideal for all social occasions, from the formal to the informal, and the large bar and lounge which is ideal for all social occasions.

From the large ballroom to the small bar and lounge, the hotel is ideal for all social occasions, from the formal to the informal, and the large bar and lounge which is ideal for all social occasions.

With its large bar and lounge, the hotel is ideal for all social occasions, from the formal to the informal, and the large bar and lounge which is ideal for all social occasions.

Each one of the 146 rooms have been designed, decorated and furnished with the finest quality materials.



GRACEY FOODS LIMITED
Food Service, Catering, and more...
We are pleased to be associated with the Tullyglass House Hotel and wish them continued success.

J. McNAUL & PARTNERS
QUANTITY SURVEYORS
BARKMORE HOUSE, BARKMORE DRIVE, BALLYMENA BT43 5DT
TEL: 01266 662784
FAX: 01266 661371
J. McNaull & Partners with Mr & Mrs McConville every success on the opening of the newly refurbished Tullyglass House Hotel

N. A. SPENCE & ELECTRIC
ALL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTS UNDERTAKEN
Industrial, Domestic, Commercial
As the regular electrical contractor we are pleased to have carried out the complete electrical renovation of the new Tullyglass House Hotel and wish them continued success.

3-E
Ballymena Business Equipment
Tel: 01264 41712
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PROUDLY AND BEST WISHES TO
KATHLEEN AND CHRIS McCONVILLE
RICHMOND
INTERIOR DESIGN AND FITTING OUT
PUBLIC AREAS

THE NEWLY REFURBISHED TULLYGLASS HOUSE HOTEL NOW OPEN

of Tullyglass

CONFERENCE

Tullyglass Hotel is the perfect setting for conferences and seminars, located as it is in the very heart of Co. Antrim and only a short drive from Belfast City and International Airports.

Whether you require an air conditioned conference room, a room for 10 people or the use of the hotel's 100,000 sq ft of space, we can cater for a 100,000 sq ft conference room, a room for 10 people or the use of the hotel's 100,000 sq ft of space.

GRACEY FOODS LIMITED
Food Service, Catering, and more...
We are pleased to be associated with the Tullyglass House Hotel and wish them continued success.

As a premier hotel, we wish to be associated with the Tullyglass House Hotel and wish them continued success.

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As a premier hotel, we wish to be associated with the Tullyglass House Hotel and wish them continued success.



The grandest function rooms at the Tullyglass House Hotel.



The grandest function rooms at the Tullyglass House Hotel.

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Specialist in all types of...
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Presenting the Newly Refurbished
Tullyglass House Hotel
GALGORM ROAD, BALLYMENA

Tullyglass House Hotel is proud to offer its customers the Finest Cuisine to suit the most discerning diner

- Choose From Our -
- 6 Course Carvery
- Impressive A La Carte Menu served in our Victoria Restaurant
- Snack Menu available in The Golfers Bar

Tullyglass House Hotel is situated in the heart of Co. Antrim, close to the scenery of the North Antrim Coast, and from next year the Hotel will be adjacent to one of Ireland's premier Furland Golf Courses at Galgorm Castle.

SO, WHETHER IT'S LEISURE, PLEASURE OR BUSINESS, WE LOOK FORWARD TO MAKING YOUR TIME WITH US UNFORGETTABLE!

Celebrate Christmas '95 With Us!

Christmas Foyre Lunch £10 a Course
Christmas Dinner £15 a Course (does not include entertainment)

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION RATES FOR THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD

Christmas Evening Meal, Entertainment and Overnight Stay with Full Breakfast

£45 Per Person Starting
£49 Per Person Single

Tullyglass House Hotel



Tullyglass Bird's Eye 2015

£5 million Conferencing and Banqueting facility

The new Conferencing and Banqueting facility
completed in 2005 visible to the rear of the property.



Clocktower Suite Interior 2014

Gala Celebration Evening


A sellout audience of 800 gather to celebrate an evening with local legend Jackie Fullerton and guests.



Tullyglass Frontal 2015

£2 million land acquisition and associated works

New Landscaping, Fountain, Gazebo, Rear car park,
Perimeter wall and entrance from Sourhill road.

A wide-angle photograph of the McAllister's Whiskey Lounge. The room features a high ceiling with ornate white columns and a herringbone-patterned wooden floor. Large windows with grey curtains let in natural light. The lounge is furnished with beige leather sofas, mustard-colored armchairs, and a curved bar with dark wood paneling and brown leather bar stools. A modern light fixture with multiple small bulbs hangs from the ceiling. Artwork, including a landscape painting and an abstract piece, is displayed on the walls. The overall atmosphere is sophisticated and elegant.

McAllister's Whiskey Lounge Refurb 2022

The £2 million refurbishment of McAllister's Whiskey Lounge pays tribute to the old Tullyglass House, hinting at the rich heritage of McAllister's Irish Whiskey and the local landscapes surrounding the hotel.





Clocktower Suite Refurb 2022

A £1.5 million investment was made into the refurbishment of the Clocktower Ballroom.

This included a full interior and exterior makeover of the ballroom, complete with luxurious, new furnishings adorned in soft, muted tones, creating the ideal backdrop for bridal parties.











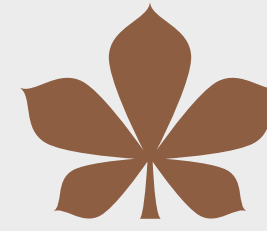
Bedroom Suite Refurb 2024

An half-million-pound investment was made within the refurbishment of three bridal suites within the hotel, designed by the highly regarded 5HT Design and Laura Cleary Interiors to offer an unparalleled experience of comfort and style.









TULLYGLASS

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