

Opening Of Tourist Office

At Rothe House

(KILKENNY PEOPLE REPORT)

A new information office of the South Eastern Regional Tourist Association was opened in Rothe House by Mrs Margaret Phelan, vice-president of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, in summer '65. Owen Roe O'Neill is said to have stayed in the house during the Confederation of Kilkenny.

Mr Arthur Cusack, area manager, South Regional Tourist Association, Right Rev Dr H. R. McAdoe, Bishop of Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin, V Rev T. J. Clohosey, president of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, Mr W. A. L. Finnigan, a member of the Board of Directors of the Regional Tourist Association and the Mayor, Mr T. Delaney spoke at the opening.

Mr Cusack said it gave him great pleasure on behalf of the South Eastern Regional Tourist Association to open this unique tourist information office.

Mrs M. Phelan, who formally opened the door of the office, thanked the Association for siting the office in Rothe House. It was a matter which gave her and the members of KAS great joy. They set out merely to restore Rothe House for Kilkenny but to make it a useful building for Kilkenny men and women.

THE SUBSCRIBERS

She thanked Right Rev Dr McAdoe, V Rev Dean Gash, V Rev Fr Clohosey, president and the other members of the KAS and all their generous benefactors who subscribed to the fund for the presentation of Rothe House.

The office was a very small part of the entire building. They had seen what had been done in that portion and the rest of the house, when completed, would be on the same lines and just as beautiful in every way. She paid a special tribute to Mr Louis Feely of the National Monuments Branch of the Board of Works who was in charge of the restoration for his help, kindness and consideration.

Mrs Phelan also paid tribute to Mr Percy de Clerc, Inspector

of National Monuments who was responsible for designing and directing the restoration work.

Right Rev Dr McAdoo said it was enormously satisfying to a Kilkenny man—he felt he was a Kilkenny man by adoption—to find this wonderful house made available as well as restored for a useful purpose. “We can have a cold antiquity but it is a great thing to bring antiquity back into the swing of the 20th century because a living past is much more important than a dead past.”

RESTORATION WORK

A great deal of restoration work had been undertaken and carried out in Kilkenny. There was the work done in St Canice's Cathedral, St Mary's Hall and now this splendid house restored and preserved for Kilkenny. He congratulated all concerned with its restoration.

V Rev Fr Clohosey congratulated the members of the KAS and all associated with the work of restoration. They were all delighted that the work had been brought to a successful conclusion.

The other day he had a letter from Ward Lock who were publishing a guide to Kilkenny and they had asked him if there were any changes he would like to make in it. He replied that there were none except that they include Rothe House. It was not mentioned at all and, in his opinion, it was one of the important items—a must to be seen in Kilkenny.

When the hoarding was up during restoration work Rothe House was of interest only to archaeologists but since it was taken down and the people were able to see the marvellous appearance the building presented the public began to take a particular interest in it. He paid a special tribute to Mrs Phelan who played a very important part in everything associated with having the building restored.

AN INSPIRATION

The Mayor congratulated the KAS on the wonderful work they had done and were doing to preserve old monuments in the city and county. They could learn much from the past and this work was an inspiration to the young people to continue the effort in the future.

He congratulated the South Eastern Regional Tourist Association on establishing the office in Kilkenny and the KAS one of the oldest archaeological societies in Ireland. He thanked Mrs Phelan for the wonderful work she had put into the restoration of Rothe House.

Mr W. A. L. Finnigan, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Regional Tourist Association, praised the very valuable work of the KAS and particularly the work done by Fr Clohosey and Mrs Phelan. Civic pride was one thing but when they wanted a job done more than civic pride was necessary. Hard work was required.

AN EXAMPLE

He could assure them that at times Mrs Phelan must have been heart broken about the attitude shown when help was required. Looking around the city there was plenty of work of improvement to be done and he hoped that Rothe House would set an example.

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