

SEARCH ON FOR MOUNTAIN'S HIDDEN PAST



An Upper Springfield community group have launched the first-ever attempt to gather together the long-forgotten history of the Black mountain.

And the Black Mountain Environmental Group at the Newhill Community Centre have already unearthed a series of exciting pictures and artefacts which tell the tale of the folk who lived on the mountain. Group supremo, Terry Enright, told the Andersonstown News yesterday that no stone had been left unturned in the bid to piece together the mountain's past. "We have even contacted the Church of Ireland minister who was responsible for the old church which stood half-way up the Mountain Loney until its demolition in 1971. It's amazing how quickly people have forgotten that a church once stood there, especially when you take into account that it was a church with a long tradition and actually featured in the 1832 ordinance survey map of the Belfast Hills."

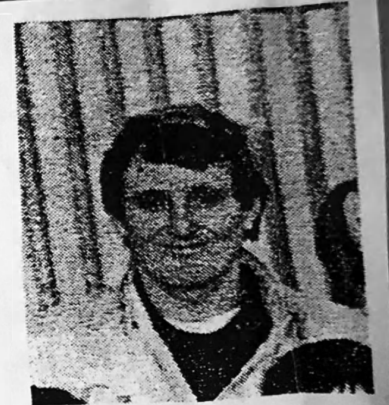
One of the stunning photos retrieved by the group (reproduced here) shows Alexander McGee, an uncle of Richard Bell whose family still live at their home above Ballygomartin and who remain proud owners of a section of the mountain. The picture was taken in 1930 when the family still farmed the mountain.

"We're also keen to get our hands on any pictures of the houses that once stood in the Hatchet

the minute we're still continuing our efforts to contact the Ireland and Dowds families who were the last people to live in the Hatchet Field."

Pictures of the old Bleaching Green, once located above Moyard and the dye works that replaced the Green until its closure in 1967, would also be welcomed by the Group.

When collated, the material on the mountain will be exhibited in the Newhill Centre. Plans are also afoot to publish the history of the mountain in book form. Anyone who has any old photos or mementos can leave them at the Newhill



■ Terry Enright.

Centre - return promised - or can contact the Group by phoning 246044.