

Irene Woods is a wonderfully gifted artist with a real understanding and compassion for nature and the beauty that surrounds us. She is also my mum, and that is why I feel so passionate about her work and why I am so proud to showcase it in Castlewood House.

When we opened Castlewood in 2005, we had a pretty large building with lots and lots of empty cream walls. Meanwhile my mum, Irene was a successful artist in Co. Louth, my home county, where she lived with my dad on our family farm since they got married in 1965.

Mum's passion is nature and she can appreciate and find a deeper beauty in the countryside around her. Living and working on a sheep farm she also got lots of inspiration for her work.

Mum discovered she had a talent for art as a teenager. I recently received a gift of the first painting she ever did, which was hanging in my grandmother's house for 60 years, and I must admit I cherish it.

Mum continued painting throughout her married life and while her style and talent evolved, her love of nature and the Cooley Peninsula and the beautiful village of Carlingford remained the same.

Her chosen medium is oil which is a very forgiving medium in that you can add or change a component much easier than if you were using watercolours. This medium also suited my mum's lifestyle as when you are a farmer's wife with four young children, you really don't have the luxury of staying painting uninterrupted for hours. It's very much 'grab an hour' here or there. As young children we all remember Mum's easel in the kitchen and watching it come to life in front of our eyes.

I have many more pieces dotted around Castlewood, mostly in the main areas but some in the bedrooms. We sell her work all over the world, and I must admit that I sometimes hate to see a piece go, as I get so attached to them. But they do go to homes where other people get to enjoy them, and love them, as much as I do.

Mum also has a lovely set of giclee prints from some of her original paintings which we sell at Castlewood and online ***in our shop***, and they are very reasonably priced at €65 each.

Most of them are bought by guests from outside Ireland, we are happy to post them to Ireland, Europe and the USA, and this is included in the price. The original oils start at €300 upwards and they can also be packed for shipping.

We have added a little video of Mum's work hanging in Castlewood, to our [You Tube channel](#), some of them very special, and my favourite "Home my Lovely" which was painted just for me.