

**FEDERATION FOR ULSTER LOCAL STUDIES**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**CARDINAL O'FIAICH LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE**  
**SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2016**

**1. Welcome**

*Roddy Hegarty* on behalf of the Library's Management Committee welcomed the FULS AGM to the Library.

Chairman, *Pat Devlin*, welcomed the delegates with special greeting for Michael Gaynor, and for Larry and Anne Breen, of the Federation of Local History Societies. The two Federations had been working closely together for the last number of years and he hoped that this would continue for the foreseeable future.

The Chairman introduced Councillor *Garath Keating*, Lord Mayor of the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. Garath was the youngest Mayor. He was also very media-savvy and had recently showed off his dancing skills to promote the Rushmere Shopping Centre in Craigavon.

The *Lord Mayor* said he was delighted to have been invited to open the AGM. He welcomed the delegates to the beautiful city of Armagh. There was so much for visitors to see and visit. He recommended the 'Mad and the Bad', an exhibition exploring mental health, crime and gender in Ireland during the last half of the nineteenth century in the Armagh City Museum. Perhaps one could search for relatives among the many photographs on display! This beautiful building, dedicated to the memory and work of the late Cardinal, was the base for much important historical research and work. In this year so much was happening to commemorate the events of a century ago and it was important to remember these so that young people could learn about their past. He wished the Federation well in its work and the AGM in its deliberations.

**2. Apologies**

The following apologies had been received -

Aine NiDhuibhne, Donegal Historical Society

Helen Meehan, Donegal Historical Society

Tobercurran Historical Society

Lisnaskea Historical Society

**3. Minutes of 2015 AGM**

The minutes of the 2015 AGM were agreed. Proposed by Matt Herbison and seconded by Doreen McBride.

Matters arising

Matt Herbison (Antrim & District Historical Society) raised the issue of employer's liability insurance which is becoming more problematic for societies when applying for grants. Bridie Bradley stated that volunteers are not employees. The Chairman suggested that the Federation would write to Antrim Council and ask for clarification of the requirement for this insurance.

**4. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Bridgeen Rutherford, presenting her report, welcomed everyone to Armagh for the Federation's 2016 AGM. Executive Committee Members elected at last year's AGM in Strabane were listed in the Statement of Accounts. Executive Committee meetings were held during the last year in Belfast Central Library, COFLA and Jury's Belfast. There was good attendance at these meetings.

Membership

Membership remained steady at 94 but renewals were slow to be submitted. There was a significant increase in individual membership at 16 which is to be welcomed.

Joint meetings with Federation of Local History Societies were held in Belfast and Dublin. These important meetings structure the joint programme for the incoming year and longer term.

## Activities

Some of the activities undertaken:

### *How-To Seminar in Kilcronaghan Centre, Tobermore -March 2016*

The Seminar aimed to provide societies with information and guidance on the resources and methodologies available in pursuing local studies, with societies sharing their experiences and knowledge. The main topics discussed were -

*Dr Brian Turner's* illustrated talk on *People and Place* ranged widely over the subject, including comparisons with other countries and cultures, on the theme that names are the 'doors into history'. There was guidance available e.g. on how to research townlands. *James Armour*, Chairman of the new Maghera Historical Society, provided a detailed account of setting up and developing a new society. Launched less than two years before, the Society has amassed an impressive array of accomplishments in a very short time, and for those thinking of setting up a new Society, his exposition was a master class in all the issues that will need to be addressed.

*Pat Devlin*, Federation Chairman, outlined the history and present stage of the *Hidden Gems and Forgotten People* project administered jointly with the Federation of Local History Societies. In October 2015 President Michael D. Higgins had opened the well-attended HG&FP Exhibition in the National Library. He had endorsed the project and wished it well. Some aspects of the project, including the geographical spread of the articles (only two of the 32 Counties were unrepresented) were illustrated, including the stories of some of the characters listed from all parts of the island. The Federation was about to discuss with Libraries NI a programme to hold Exhibitions in local Libraries over the following year, the first of which would be in Belfast Central Library in September. The rolling programme would involve local societies in helping to plan, publicise, launch and run the Exhibitions, which would run for three weeks at each location. There would be similar Exhibitions in Counties Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan.

*Graham Mawhinney*, Ballinascreen Historical Society, which has been active since 1980, began by placing its location in its historical and geographical context. He described the society's origins and the personalities involved. His theme, *Bringing Local History to the Wider Public* focussed on the Societies publication programme. Early on it had been decided not to publish a journal but to research and publish on a range of local subjects, including local history, poetry and stories. In total, the society created 39 publications, some of which he described. For 10 years until 1995, the Society had organised four historical walks annually, attracting large groups of visitors.

*Roddy Hegarty*, Cardinal O'Fiaich Library, spoke about the challenges facing local historical societies in the Decade of Centenaries. Acknowledging that commemoration events were potentially divisive, he nevertheless encouraged local societies to review the potential of their local areas. Commemoration marks out the special from the ordinary, retains memory of people and events, can encourage social interaction and present a challenge. He discussed the difficulties of objectivity and the need to revisit, revise and rewrite the received version of past events, now that new and additional historical resources were becoming available. He used the history of the Famine to illustrate the ways in which new sources of information can provide new insights not available or easy to access in the past. An enormous and growing range and volume of historical information was now available on-line. He pointed up the danger of viewing the past through the medium of the present, or through interest groups who often used research to reinforce the perceived version of events rather than by reviewing the evidence for alternative interpretations.

### *English Midlands Trip – April*

Fifty-one local historians from the two Federations, representing 22 societies in 13 counties visited locations in the English Midlands and Oxfordshire. With a local guide they visited the two Cathedrals in Coventry, the Shugborough Hall and Estate, and Litchfield, and had a talk by a local historian from the Leamington Historical Society. The following day they visited Shakespeare's country and the beautiful Stratford-upon-Avon via a scenic route through the lovely Warwickshire villages, exploring Anne Hathaway's Cottage; saw all the houses associated with the bard and saw his last resting place at Holy Trinity Church. They visited Warwick Castle, built by William the Conqueror in 1068, and rounding off the day with a walking tour of Leamington. The third day took them south to Blenheim Palace, the birthplace of the 1st Duke's famous descendant, Winston Churchill, having lunch in the Spencer-Churchill room with a panoramic view of the palace grounds and had a guided walk past many of the beautiful and architecturally impressive buildings which go to make up the city. Everyone was left with fond memories of the people and places they encountered on the way.

### Joint Trip – Dublin, July 2016

The joint trip took in Kilmainham Jail and Glasnevin Cemetery. Some 50 people from societies all over the island had a guided tour of both places. In Kilmainham they toured the cell blocks and visited the stonebreaker's yard where the executions took place between the 3 and 12 May 1916. In Glasnevin Cemetery they visited some of the graves of eminent personalities and, in company with governmental, political and military representatives from North and South, watched the unveiling of Victoria Cross Commemoration Paving Stones organised by the Department of Arts, Heritage Regional Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

### Hidden Gems and Forgotten People – Programme Launch

On 22 September the Federation launched the first of nine *Hidden Gems and Forgotten People* Exhibitions in Belfast Central Library. The aim of the project was to encourage local societies and communities to identify people and places for publication on the website. Some ninety-people attended the launch. The Guest Speaker, *Tom Hartley*, a well-known historian, provided a rousing send-off for the project, which will take twelve or fifteen months to complete.

### Trip to Belgium Battlefields and the European Parliament

From 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September a group of 50 local historians, representing 14 Counties and 28 societies from both Federations visited the WW1 Battlefields in Belgium and the European Parliament. Based in the Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe, the group visited the *Ypres* battlefields taking in the *Island of Peace Park*, near Messines, *Hill 62*, *Tyne Cot* cemetery, and the trenches at *Sanctuary Wood*. They attended the 'Last Post and Reveille' at the *Menin Gate* where they laid a wreath in memory of the dead. The group visited the European Parliament and enjoyed a guided tour of the city of *Bruges*. The final leg of the trip took them to France and the valley of the *Somme*, scene of the bloodiest battle in the Western Front, where, in the *Thiepval* area they visited the *Ulster Memorial Tower* and had a guided tour, later visiting the *Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial Park*, the *Guillemont Road Cemetery* and ending at *Thiepval*. Before flying home, the group visited Waterloo, spending some time in its interactive museum and its spectacular *Lions Mound*. Apart from the history, all will remember the trip as a journey of friendship, sharing, comradeship and fun.

### Joint Seminar, Dundalk

On 5 November the joint FULS/ FLHS seminar *Years of Endurance: Personalities and Events and their impact on Irish Family Life 1912-1922* was held in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Dundalk.

This seminar explored the impact of war and revolution on the lives of ordinary people in Ireland, north and south, during the years 1912-1922. It examined the effects of the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme.

Topics and Speakers were:

*The Impact of Rebellion, War and Partition on Women in The North of Ireland 1912-1922* by Dr Myrtle Hill, former Director of the Centre for Women's Studies at Queen's University, Belfast.

*Radical Women 1916-1923: Politics – Promise and Loss* by Dr Mary McAuliffe, Lecturer/Assistant Professor in Gender Studies at UCD Women's Studies, School of Social Policy/Social Justice.

*The Impact of War and its Immediate Aftermath on the Working Class in the North of Ireland* by Dr Peter Collins, Senior Lecturer in History in St Mary's University College, Belfast.

*Surviving the Revolution* by Pádraig Yeats; journalist, historian, author and trade union activist.

The seminar attracted a good turnout, was enjoyed by all that attended and made for some interesting discussion topics. A full report will be on the website in the near future.

### Due North

Today sees the Launch of the 2016 edition of *Due North*. Please enjoy reading this copy as Johnny Dooher would welcome feedback and suggestions for improving the publication. I am sure you will agree that Johnny Dooher does an excellent job in putting the publication together and getting it published on time. *Due North* is now a component of membership but copies are still available for Societies to sell. Contact Johnny for further copies or if you wish to submit articles for consideration for publication.

### Conclusion

It has been an eventful year for the Federation. Executive committee membership attendance at meetings remained steady. The Committee welcomed the support of members who may not be able to sit on the

executive committee but can contribute as necessary. Bridgeen thanked the membership for its support. It would be useful to let the Committee know of any seminars/workshops societies might wish to explore.

Bridgeen thanked Pat Devlin for his guidance and support over the past year. It had been a unique learning curve which she hoped to have excelled at by the end of his term next year.

The Secretary's report was approved.

## **6. Financial Report and Accounts**

Bridie Bradley, Treasurer, presented the Trustees' Report & Financial Statement.

The Federation is a limited company registered in Northern Ireland. It is also a charitable company recognised by HM Revenue & Customs and registered with the Northern Ireland Charities Commission. It therefore prepares accounts in the format laid down by Companies House.

Pages 1 – 5 gives details of the Trustees who served during the year together with a report of the Federation's activities and performance in the relevant period.

Page 6 is the independent examiner's certificate.

Pages 7 to 11 outline the financial details.

The total income for the year was £14,749 and expenses were £14,676 leaving, with a net profit of £74.00. At the end of the financial year the bank balance was £15,908.00.

Income from various sources is detailed in Note 2 on Page 10. Membership and insurance was slightly up on last year. Excursions/Events - includes receipts from seminars, AGM, the joint Federation trip to England and the joint North/South trip.

The income from Publications was down as each society gets five copies of *Due North* with their membership. There is a slight increase in travel costs. Mileage and travel expenses are reimbursed when travelling on Federation business.

Office expenses £898, internet charges £856, and the "other" £505 relate to postage, stationery, purchase of a computer solely for Federation business and keeping the website and internet up-to-date.

The amount of £7,185 was spent on Events/Excursions includes expenditure incurred on two seminars Omagh and Kilcronaghan, speakers' fees and catering for the AGM (Strabane).

Also included is the amount spent on the joint North/South outing to the Somme Centre, Mount Stewart and Carrickfergus and the joint FLHS/FULS trip to England.

Bank charges showed a slight increase from last year. The amount of £1,140 for publications is the charge for the printing and typesetting of *Due North*.

The Governance costs remained the same at £250.00 for accounting fees and Companies House filing fee of £13.00.

The Financial report was approved.

## **7. Chairman's Address**

Pat Devlin gave his Chairman's address:

Pat welcomed everyone for making your way to Armagh, especially to our friends from the Federation for Local History Societies – Larry and Anne Breen and Michael Gaynor, their current Chairman.

The year has been an exceptionally busy one, involving the planning and delivery of eight events.

- One 'How-to' Seminar in March.
- Three joint trips - the English Midlands in April, Dublin in July, and to the WW1 Battlefields in September
- Three Hidden Gems and Forgotten People Exhibitions – Belfast in September, the one here in the O'Fiaich Library, kindly allowed at short notice by Roddy Hegarty and the one in Ballymena to be launched on Monday next.
- Plus, the highly successful Joint *Years of Endurance* Seminar in Dundalk two weeks ago.

For purely voluntary organisations, that was an impressive performance that could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of the members of the Executive Committee and our friends and colleagues in the southern Federation.

This had been his first year as Chairman and he hadn't been looking forward to it as he was happiest contributing in the background. But in fact, he had thoroughly enjoyed it. What made it enjoyable was the people. The Executive Committee members are all characters, different but with the same willingness to share and deliver what is asked of them.

It's normally invidious to pick out people but he felt he had to thank Johnny Dooher, our longest serving and most experienced member, and long-time Editor of *Due North*. Johnny had been a steadying influence and a great help, unflustered and pragmatic, always ready with helpful suggestions when we sometimes got stuck. He seemed to know everybody, which was a real help.

Thanks too to Bridgeen Rutherford, our Secretary, quietly beavering away to keep the machinery of Committee running smoothly, arranging the meetings, preparing the minutes and dealing with the correspondence.

The job of the Treasurer is a demanding one, requiring precision in accounting for the money (which must balance to the penny, or the cent), meeting exacting accounting standards, to satisfy Companies House requirements, keeping the Executive Committee informed about the current financial position and identifying any foreseen and unforeseen problems. Bridie Bradley does all that quietly and efficiently. So, 'thank you' Bridie, for doing well what is often seen as a thankless task.

Patrick Greer was new in the role of Membership Registrar: not an easy job as it requires constant attention and liaison with members, often chasing them to renew membership. The maintenance of an up-to-date membership database is vital for effective communications. Thank you, Patrick.

Pat also thanked John Hulme who had a special interest in the *Hidden Gems and Forgotten People project*. John worked doggedly to increase the visibility of the project throughout the province, visiting societies, extolling its value in celebrating individual achievement in the local setting, recalling to and preserving in memory men and women who made a difference in their local communities, or who added colour and gaiety to people's lives. He had been fully involved in the planning and delivery of the Federation's programme of Exhibitions. Thanks, John.

Pat also thanked our friends and colleagues from the Southern Federation; Larry Breen, JJ Woods, Dick Ryan, Michael Gaynor, Pdraig Laffan, Frank Taaffe, and the rest of the Executive Committee for their commitment to our joint endeavours under the cachet of *The History Federations of Ireland*. We had built a truly impressive joint group, meeting alternatively in Belfast and Dublin. The meetings were practical, cooperative, and great craic. Long may they continue.

The Chairman's final thanks were to our retiring President, Professor Ronnie Buchanan, former Director of the Institute of Irish Studies in Queens, and former Regional Chairman of the National Trust.

Ronnie had served as President since at least 2008. I say at least because he was already the President at that date but the Federation's earlier records were lost. Ronnie was a lecturer in Geography in Queen's for much of his career - a student and disciple of Dr Estyn Evans in the evolution of social geography and folkways. He succeeded Evans as professor and head of Geography at Queen's and then as Director of the multi-disciplinary Institute of Irish Studies which he led for several years before his retirement. He was a very firm supporter of the Federation and helped greatly in seeking government funding and support for them in the late 1980s as well as providing them with a base at the Institute of Irish Studies in Fitzwilliam Street over a ten-year period in the 1990's. Ronnie was very supportive of the project led by Angelique Day in publishing the complete set of Ordnance Survey Memoirs and supported other Fellows in publishing the results of their research. Ronnie was supported by assistant director, Dr Brian Walker, who succeeded him as head of the Institute and maintained it as a thriving centre for inter-disciplinary work until the leadership at Queen's decided that financial considerations should be paramount in the pursuit of academic excellence. So, 'thank you Ronnie' for your support over the years and we wish you all the best for the future.

So, what of the future for local historical research? The recent *years of Endurance* Seminar in Dundalk provided an example of the potential of the Centenary of Commemorations approach to give new perspectives on the impact that that turbulent decade had on the lives of both the people and the communities of the time, and the lasting impact of those events on what happened in the succeeding decades, up to and including the present day. Interestingly, Deirdre McBride from the Community Relations Council, which has part-funded the Seminar, was at the event. She commented favourably on the high standards and level of participation and is considering using it as a case study in the Council's review of the Decade of Anniversaries toolkit of good practice.

There was a lot of good, solid, research work taking place in the Societies, much of which gets plenty of local publicity but seldom comes to the attention of the wider membership. That's a pity. Due North has a role in disseminating information about local journals and publications but not every publication is known to the Editor. Another way of bringing publications to wider notice is through the NIPR and local societies are encouraged to send copies of their material to it. NIPR publishes a quarterly update of all the deposits and this is available on the Federation's website.

Some societies run their own websites where a dynamic record of their activities, programmes and projects is maintained. These are widely available to interested searchers. This is admirable and to be encouraged. Some have news sections that keep members advised of forthcoming events. It was not of course something that every society can develop or afford. As well as, or instead of, websites, many societies maintain a Facebook presence where a more interactive approach can encourage public engagement in programmes and initiatives, as well as affording an opportunity for people to provide historical information and photographs about local people, places and events.

If he mentioned one or two of these websites and Facebook pages it is not to dismiss the others but rather as examples of imaginative use of image, text, poetry and design. He would commend them to societies as well worth visiting to see what can be presented in the modern world to appeal to a wide variety of interests and tastes.

The first of these was Donaghadee Historical Society who have both a website and a Facebook presence. Did you know that Thomas Hardy wrote a four-stanza whimsical poem about Donaghadee, although he never visited the town? There is a wide variety of articles, including some on strong women, including Mercedes Gleitz who in 1927 was the first woman to swim the English Channel, repeating the feat three weeks later to prove the sceptics wrong. Her Donaghadee connection was her three unsuccessful attempts to swim from there to Port Patrick in Scotland. Then there was Sarah Grand, from Donaghadee, a successful Victorian novelist who shocked the world with her controversial take on marriage and sexuality. There is a monthly photochat section with entries stretching back six years, each a series of stories built around photographs. Fascinating stuff that will keep you reading for hours. The design is pleasing and modern and the navigation is clear and intuitive. Look it up on Google and enjoy.

Glenelly Historical Society set up a Facebook presence to undertaking a unique project, 'Glenelly Our Home' to photograph every empty building in the Plumbridge and Cranagh areas that was once home for someone from their past. With some 50 townlands to cover they sought help from the public, asking them to contribute photographs and information. They posted photos of unidentified buildings and invited input. The response came from all over the world where exiles identified places and information about the families who had lived there.

The page is well organised with a side menu that acts almost like a regular website (most unusual for Facebook), where topics are grouped.

As an example of public engagement in local historical research, it was hard to beat.

Other Facebook pages worth checking out for ideas as to how to showcase your societies activities include O'Neill Country Historical Society and the Lecale & Downe Historical Society.

Last year Johnny Doohar, in his Chairman's address, encouraged members of Societies to take a more active role, to challenge the past, to look for different interpretations of past events, to share their local history, to seek help from others, including the Federation, where they think we can contribute, as we stand ready to do. That was good advice and worth repeating. There are well over 8,000 individual members in our 94 affiliated societies. A lot of these will be will be passive, interested only in attending talks and events, and enjoying the social aspect, but there must still be many hundreds of potential historians, who, with encouragement, and given guidance and help, could contribute much to the discovery and recording of their own areas' rich history. Perhaps the Federation, in the next period, should devote some time to considering how to advance this idea.

One way in which individuals in Societies might begin to develop a feel for research would be for them to become involved in the Hidden Gems and Forgotten People Project, an Exhibition of which is in the Entrance Hall here today, thanks to Roddy Hegarty for facilitating it. It would remain there until Christmas. It is an unscheduled addition to the published programme of exhibitions that you will find in your folder. The second scheduled exhibition was due to be launched on Monday next in Ballymena Central Library.

Despite a lot of publicity, and expressions of general enthusiasm when discussed, it had attracted little practical response. He wasn't sure why. Perhaps people thought there are no suitable places of people in their locality; yet a review of local journals turns up many examples. They didn't need to stay only in the local publication, but could enjoy national and international exposure. The aim of the project

was to bring to the attention of the wider community, indeed to anyone. anywhere in the world, just such local heroes. Where else can people contribute directly to an international dictionary of people and places?

The Chairman said that he didn't want to go into the project in depth. Just to stress the Federation's commitment to its continuing development. What he would like to ask each Society to do, over the next month or two, was to put the project on its Agenda for discussion with Executive Committees and/ or members with a view to getting a group together, or finding a willing volunteer, to begin a process of actively seeking out people of places that meet the wide criteria for inclusion in the dictionary. The Federation was ready to help in any way it can by e.g. attending meetings, providing advice and helping with drafting.

The next item on the Agenda was the election of the Officers and Executive Committee.

### 8. Election of Officers and Committee

The Chairman vacated the Chair and asked Johnny Dooher, the immediate Past Chairman, to conduct the elections

POSITION	NOMINEE	NOMINATED BY
<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	Patrick Devlin	Lecale and Downe Historical Society New Buildings & District Archaeological and Historical Society
<b>VICE-CHAIRMAN</b>	Doreen McBride	New Buildings & District Archaeological and Historical Society
<b>SECRETARY</b>	Bridgeen Rutherford	New Buildings & District Archaeological and Historical Society
<b>TREASURER</b>	Bridie Bradley	West Belfast Historical Society
Proposed by Florence Chambers and seconded by Patrick Greer		
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>		
John Bradley	West Tyrone Historical Society	
Áine NiDhuibhne	Donegal Historical Society	
Florence Chambers	Banbridge Historical Society	
Patrick Greer	West Belfast Historical Society	
John Hulme	New Buildings & District Archaeological and Historical Society	
Pat McGuigan	Strabane History Society	
Johnny Dooher	Ex-officio	
Proposed by Helen Rankin and seconded by Frank Collins		

At the conclusion of the elections Pat Devlin resumed the Chair.

### 9. Election of President and Vice-President

The following resolution was passed -

*Pursuant of Article 82.2. of the Articles of Association, The Executive Committee recommends the appointments of Dr Brian Turner as President, and Monsignor Raymond Murray as Vice-President of the Federation*

Dr Brian Turner was proposed by Doreen McBride and seconded by Florence Chambers as President of the Federation.

Monsignor Raymond Murray was proposed by Patrick Greer and seconded by John Bradley as Vice-President of the Federation.

#### **10. Appointment of Auditor**

Mrs Roisin Shanks was reappointed as auditor for FULS. This was proposed by Bridie Bradley and seconded by Matt Herbison. Johnny Dooher abstained from voting due to conflict of interest.

#### **11. Federation of Local History Societies – Southern Federation**

*Michael Gaynor*, Chairman of the Federation of Local History Societies, congratulated the Federation on excellent AGM, the newly elected Officers and committee: also, the newly elected President and Vice President. He thanked the Ulster federation for the invitation to attend the AGM in this wonderful Cardinal O'Fiaich library in the ancient and beautiful City of Armagh. He knew Cardinal O'Fiaich, and had met him on many occasions during his many 'ministry' visits to Dundalk. His love for the Irish language and the part he played in the peace process is well documented. The two Federations had worked together in a congenial and collaborative fashion, for many years now, as exemplified by the development of the Hidden Gems and Forgotten People project. The project had reawakened within communities an appreciation of their local history and an understanding of the importance of discovering, and recovering, the events and people of the past. The impact of the project had surpassed all expectations, and it had helped to promote a new interest in local history in communities throughout the island of Ireland, which is, after all, part of the rationale behind the establishment of both federations.

The recent joint Federation trip, to Belgium and France, expertly organised by Larry Breen, was an unmitigated success, with fifty people from both Federations visiting the battlefields of Flanders and the Somme. It had been an emotional and exciting experience.

The joint Federations Seminar, 'Years of endurance personalities and events and their impact on Irish family life in the early part of the 20th century', held in Dundalk on the 5th of November was another decisive joint venture success. With Teamwork being the order of the day, a quote from Pat Devlin regarded the event, that, "The whole thing went like a well-oiled machine", summed it up!

Michael wished the Federation continued success, and to continuing friendship and collaboration.

#### **12. Society Reports**

There were two FULS Society contributions.

First was *Helen Rankin*, speaking on behalf of the Carrickfergus Gasworks Preservation Society and the Carrickfergus Historical Society. In the past year, the Gasworks Preservation Society had salvaged an extensive archive of old maps and drawings from the Belfast Gasworks of which some 856 had been digitised, and were now available in polypockets. They had also, in collaboration with the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, interviewed many old gas workers and the interviews were available on the Society's website and at the Museum. The Carrickfergus Historical Society had been working closely with their neighbouring Abbey Historical Society and had undertaken a number of joint visits and were planning a joint Christmas Events.

The second report was by *Pat McGuigan* of the Strabane History Society who talked about the Society's project on Strabane in WW1, resulting in a publication *Strabane and District in World War 1- The Local Impact Part1: 1914-15*, available for sale here. Work continued on the project.

As this was the last item on the Agenda, the Chairman thanked everyone for their participation and declared the AGM closed.

#### **Launch of Due North**

The 2016 Edition of *Due North* was launched by the Federation's newly-elected Vice-Chairman, *Monsignor Raymond Murray*, who recalled the early days of the Federation and the first attempt at a publication: described by someone as having been "put together with a spade". Despite the troubled times, the last forty years had seen a quiet revolution in local studies with many societies publishing high quality journals. He summarised some of the articles to provide a flavour of the journal and congratulated Johnny Dooher on a fine publication.

There were two Guest Speakers, each providing an overview of the resources available in their organisation. First was *Roddy Hegarty* on the Cardinal O'Fiaich Library and Resource, followed by *Carol Conlon*, Assistant Keeper of Records at Armagh City Library.

Starting with the question "Why are you here?", *Roddy* rapidly traced the complicated and interesting history of the establishment of the two cathedrals, both dedicated to St. Patrick, and the Cardinal O'Fiaich Library and



Archive, and also role of Dr William Crawley and others in establishing the primacy of Armagh. He described the work of Dr Crawley, an industrious man who had rapidly developed the church in Belfast, and Armagh. COFLA was not just library but also a repository, of documents, books, manuscripts, maps etc. There were over one million documents, 35-40 thousand published works, 450 thousand periodical titles. Much of the collection featured Cardinal O'Fiaich's archive, reflecting not only church affairs but also history, language and cultural history. A quarter of the million documents related to Irish connections in eight European countries had been collected by one individual, Micheline Kerney Walsh. Born in Paris and moving to Spain, as a child, she began her life's work of gathering information about Irish people who had immigrated to Europe between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. This was a huge untapped source. For example, a visiting researcher from Rennes had spent six weeks extracting 2,500 names registered in Nantes between the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 and the French Revolution a century later. Many of the names matched those still to be found in Counties Waterford and Cork.

**Other resources include -**

- Irish language poetic tradition of Oriel; great Gaelic poets of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, usually chroniclers in the employment of the chieftains. Later in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were poets more in tune with the lives of ordinary people. Over 400 of these verses were gathered in the course of the last 150 years and were preserved for safekeeping and study;
- an oral archive put together by a Magherafelt Priest, Fr Louis O'Kane, who in 1963 interviewed over 100 people, mainly from Ulster, who were veterans of the Anglo-Irish war. All now long dead, their authentic voices of that period are preserved. One of those interviewed was Kathleen Clark, widow of Tom Clark, the first signatory of the 1916 Proclamation;
- a collection on Irish sport;
- a collection of over 3,000 publications in the Irish language;
- a contemporary history collection - the history of the last five decades;
- two maps drawn at the beginning of the seventeenth century and published in 1627. The first, John Speed's Map of Ireland, the first map to show Lough Erne as two separate bodies of water, meaning that he had walked the ground and that his map was therefore likely to be more accurate than any of his predecessors. The second map is the first map of Ulster, drawn by an Englishman. Until the Flight of the Earls Ulster was the place that the English knew the least about. Shows the transition, the map still has the old kingships as well as the new names. Interestingly, in this map, County Louth is shown as part of Ulster.

*Roddy* said that the Library conservation and preservation of materials would continue so long as it was relevant and it would be relevant only so long as people wanted to use them. He invited delegates and their societies to visit the Archive to see for themselves the wealth of material available.

*Carol Conlon*, said that Armagh was incredibly lucky to have four Libraries and three museums. The Armagh County Library was both a library and a museum. All the libraries and museums worked together to promote the city. Armagh was Patrick's chosen city and the library's founder, Archbishop Richard Robinson, on being appointed as Church of Ireland Premier of All Ireland, in 1765, determined to build a library. At that time the city was in a very poor state of repair. The Long Room was used to greet visitors and the shelving, designed by the Archbishop to display his collections of gems, coins and medals, was still in place, though without the original contents. Another building, the former Registry to hold Diocesan records, was in the middle of a terrace used to house widows and the families of the lay singers who had to be on hand to sing twice a day. This held the print collection, the gem collection, the coin collection and the medals collection. There were also interactive displays. *Carol* distributed some leaflets with additional information about the Library and other places available.

**Appendix 1****ATTENDEES**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>SOCIETY</b>
Pat Devlin	Lecale & Downe Historical Society
Bridie Bradley	West Belfast
Patrick Greer	West Belfast
Art and Maureen Daly	Naas and O'Neill Country Society
Larry Breen	FLHS
Anne Breen	FLHS
Michael Gaynor	FLHS
Mons Raymond Murray	Hon Vice-President elect
Pat O'Neill	Donaghmore
Helen Rankin	Carrickfergus
John Hulme	Carrickfergus
George Elliott	Carrickfergus
Josie and Matt Herbison	Antrim
Katie Orme	Antrim
Jane Edwards	Antrim
George Beattie	Banbridge
Elizabeth Hoy	Individual
Elizabeth Boyd	Individual
Florence Chambers	Banbridge
Ella Burns	Banbridge
Doreen and George McBride	Banbridge
Bridgeen and George Rutherford	New Buildings Archaeological and Historical Society
Patrick Fitzgerald	Mellon Centre, Omagh
Johnny Dooher	Strabane
John Bradley	West Tyrone
Pat McGuigan	Strabane
Frank Collins	West Tyrone
Sheena McClure	West Tyrone
Hazel Henderson	West Tyrone
Graham and Jennifer Mawhinney	Ballinascreen
Jack Johnston	Clogher