

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Introduction

This report covers the year from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to severely restrict the activities of Member Societies during the period being reported and in many cases seen the complete cessation of business. This report sets out the very limited activities of the Executive Committee since 1st April 2021. Because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, all meetings were via ZOOM.

Membership

Society Membership stands at 92, Individual Membership, 23. Many societies were inactive during the year and two societies ceased operations. Twelve societies had not renewed their membership for the year despite several reminders but all have been invited to re-join for the incoming year and current indications are that society activity is on the increase with many societies now up and running again.

In view of the continuing impact of the pandemic on Members' activities, and their financial resources, as well as the fact that the Federation is at present able to provide only limited services, the Executive Committee decided to continue the reduction of membership fees by 50% for the 2021-2022 year. Members (Society and individual) that paid by Standing Order were refunded the difference in November 2021.

The committee are suggesting that all major dates are regularised and end on 31st March i.e. financial year, insurance year and membership year (currently 30th September). A motion will be put to the annual general meeting to facilitate this with effect from 1st April 2023.

Officers & Committee

Officers

Chairman: Robert Guthrie – Roe Valley Ancestral Researchers

Vice-Chairman: Joseph McCoy – individual member

Treasurer: Bridie Bradley, West Belfast Historical Society

Executive Committee

Johnny Dooher – Strabane History Society

Josephine Herbison: Immediate Past Chairman (Antrim H.S.)

Helen Meehan: Donegal Historical Society

Aine NíDuibhne: Donegal Historical Society

Administration Review

Following on from the AGM 2021 and the failure to fill all administrative positions on the Federation executive committee it was decided that an Administrative Officer should be appointed to ensure that all key duties of the Federation would be carried out in line with its responsibilities as a registered charity. Mr. Patsy McShane, a long-time member of the Ballinascreen History Society and a member of the early Federation committee was appointed by the executive committee at the February meeting.

Insurance

The Federation continues to provide public liability insurance for its members. As a result of reduced activity at local level the Federation Executive reduced insurance premiums for societies to a flat fee of £15 for the year past.

Due North

Due North was once again produced in 2021 and circulated to member societies and contained many interesting articles including:

The Oakboys of Cookstown and East Tyrone by Sebastian Graham

The Green Road by Jack Hognston

The Brakes that Failed – Armagh Rail Disaster by James Scannell

The Montgomery Family of Donegal by Helen Meehan

Mable Remington Colhoun by Sean Beattie (Dr)

From Workhouse Days to Hospital in Dungannon by Bertie Foley

Arthur Bell Nicholls by Josie Herbinson

Internet Resources for the Study of Local History by Evelyn Cardwell

The United Irish Men in the Maghera Area by Joe McCoy

Thanks are due to all the contributors who provided the articles needed to make the publication possible.

Website

As very little activity happened during the year the website there was limited updates of the website. It is hoped that this very useful facility will be reactivated in the incoming year. A lot of material regarding the Federation can be accessed on the website www.fuls.org.uk

News-letter

Two news-letters were issued during the year updating members on the activities albeit limited of the Federation and its member societies. Both news-letters can be obtained on the Federation website.