

# Minutes of AGM of Federation of Local History Societies

held in

**Castle Court Hotel Westport**

on

**26<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

Following the success achieved by holding the AGM of the Federation over a weekend in Kilmallock in 2011, it was decided to hold the 2012 AGM as part of a weekend event in Westport Co. Mayo.

After dinner on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May, delegates were treated to a presentation of pictures from the Lawrence collection featuring Westport given by Seamus Gavin from Westport. A large number of local history society members also attended this event from Mayo.

## **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

Preceding the AGM there was a very brief meeting of the federation executive committee to deal with last minute arrangements.

Members decided not to charge any fee to delegates who were only attending on a daily basis. Weekend delegates had a pre-arranged package with the hotel.

## **AGM**

**Chairman Frank Taaffe** welcomed delegates and expressed apologies for Federation President Fr. Seán O'Doherty and Hon. Secretary Dermot Ryan who were unable to attend and also for John Bradshaw and Martina Griffin (Moate). He especially welcomed John Doherty and his wife who were there representing the Federation for Ulster Local Studies.

He then introduced Austin Vaughan the Mayo County Librarian who would formally open the proceedings.

Mr. Vaughan welcomed the visitors to Westport and spoke on the relationship between Libraries and the local history community.

**Chairman Frank Taaffe then gave the Chairman's address.** (*qv*)

**Hon Treasurer Mairead Byrne then gave the Treasurer's report.** (*qv*)

She explained that this covered the period since she actually commenced work as Hon. Treasurer and to the degree to which she had documentation available.

She advised members of the current annual fees for membership for the different size of societies:

Up to 15 members	€15
From 15 to 25 members	€25
Above 25 Members	€40

She advised societies paying by banker's order to make sure they were paying the correct amount as it had come to light that some societies were paying amounts which had been long ago converted from Punts by the banks and had not been rounded down to the above rates.

It was agreed by the members, that when the affiliation of societies is brought up to date, as is currently being worked upon, that federation finance will be such as not to require any increase in membership fees this year.

The present cash in the bank stands at: €3,134.85

The deposit account stands at: €6,418.42

There is €2000 worth of prize bonds in the federation's name but she has not yet acquired the paperwork for these.

She advised members of the decision not to charge delegates for attending the AGM.

The members agreed the financial report.

### **Frank Taaffe delivered the Hon. Secretary's report on his behalf.**

#### **Election of Officers;**

It was proposed by the chair that the secretarial function would be split into separate parts to improve functioning of the federation committee.

Henceforth there would be a membership secretary as well as a secretary to the executive committee

The membership secretary would include PRO and website duties. This was agreed by the members.

**Chairman:** Frank Taaffe, proposed by JJ Woods, seconded by Kay Lonergan. This was agreed.

**Vice Chairman:** Pádraig Laffan, proposed by F. Taaffe, seconded by Larry Breen. This was agreed.

**Hon. Secretary:** As committee were not certain of Dermot Ryan's personal situation and availability, it was decided to leave this position to the incoming committee to fill, in consultation with Dermot Ryan. This was agreed.

**Hon Treasurer:** Mairead Byrne, proposed by F. Taaffe and seconded by P.J. Lynn. This was agreed

**Membership Secretary PRO:** Larry Breen, proposed by Frank Taaffe for Membership Secretary and Webmaster, seconded by Kay Lonergan. This was agreed

**Committee Members:** The following were agreed to be committee members:

Joe Williams	Clondalkin	
Kay Lonergan	Clontarf	
To be appointed	Galway	
Maeve Mulryan	Maynooth	
Martina Griffin	Moate	
Betty Quinn	Drogheda	
Richard Ryan	Rathmichael	
John Bradshaw	Tipperary	
Richard Farrelly	Navan	rjfarrelly@gmail.com New Member.
Pat O' Donovan	Knockfierna	No email New Member.
Michael Gaynor	Old Dundalk	michaeljgaynor@hotmail.com New Member.

## **A.O.B.**

### **Discussion**

There was considerable discussion of the possibility of having individual membership for persons outside of local history societies but still wishing to be part of the federation.

This was proposed by Larry Breen and seconded by Pádraig Laffan

This was agreed with the provision that incoming executive committee to put in place some rules with regard to their voting rights within the federation.

### **Non-affiliated individual history collectors**

Apart from their membership of the federation, there was agreement among the delegates that local societies should keep close contact with such 'loner' historians to assist and facilitate them and to try to ensure that any historical artifacts and documents they might have would not be lost or destroyed in the event of their illness or death. It would be very helpful if such individuals or indeed very small history groups were advised of suitable repositories.

Allison Ryan, of A.R. Imaging, spoke about a community photographic project she was working on. The purpose of this was to create an archive on line of old family photographs and locate them on Google Maps with Family names, thereby creating a photographic genealogical resource. She encouraged members to visit the website and take part in the project

Larry Breen spoke about the new Federation website and invited member societies to contribute material to it.

He said that there was considerable interest in having a list of speakers, and the topics they might speak on, available on the website – again we need the information from speakers and societies. A list of publications by societies would also be a very valuable resource, which could be included on the website

### **Hidden Gems Project**

Larry also described the Hidden Gems Project and Pádraig Laffan displayed both it and the website on a large screen for delegates to see.

Both the FULS and the FLHS are encouraging societies and individuals to contribute pages to the Hidden Gems site

**The History Festival in Rathvilly on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> June** was also described and members were encouraged to come along to that.

### **Society Spake:**

**John Doohar** (Federation for Ulster Local Studies) spoke about the continued relationship between the FLHS and the FULS, and the recent very successful joint FULS/FLHS Banbridge and York Tours.

**Michael Gaynor** (Old Dundalk) spoke of their jubilee celebrations coming up in 2014. He described purchasing artefacts for their society on E-Bay.

**Richard Farrelly** (Navan) spoke about various items including field names projects, headstone recording and their new book, *Navan its People and its Past*.

**Pat O'Donovan** (Knockfierna) reported on their local walks and the restoration of a famine cabin and the restored rambling house, which they now use for events.

**Jenny Webb** (Ballincollig Heritage Society) spoke about the Gunpowder mills, and other projects in that area.

**P. J. Lynn** (Crossmolina) spoke about the Crossmolina connection with Bord Na Mona and the Heard Land exhibition, which is available free, about the history of Bord Na Mona. He mentioned the difficulty of dealing with the National Museum in regard to artefacts from their own area.

**Betty Quinn** (Old Drogheda) spoke of their society and its work in the Millmount Museum, and how they use many subcommittees to get a wide variety of projects running simultaneously.

**Kay Lonergan** (Clontarf) spoke of organising her talks programme and of the Bram Stoker connection with Clontarf. She also talked about the wealth of information in Roque maps for talks about local areas.

**Aidan Clarke** (Westport) our hosts, welcomed us to Westport and described the Heritage Centre they run as well as their programme of talks and of walks.

**Brendan Cullen** (Clane Local History Group) described how this year they produced their first journal called Coiseanna.

**Eugene Jordan** (Galway Archaeological and Historical Soc.) described the work of their society in Galway.

**Mairead Byrne** (Rathcoffey) spoke of her society's past year and projects.

The chairman thanked the delegates, particularly the Westport Society who had gone to great lengths to make us welcome and provided a wonderful weekend for their visitors. He advised members of the walking tour of Westport, which was to take place after lunch on that day (Saturday), and the visit to Westport House on Sunday morning, which was generously being provided by Westport House at no charge to members

This ended the business of the meeting

Pádraig Laffan