

FEDERATION OF LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES

Minutes of the AGM at the Health Centre, Kilcullen, Sat., 29th March, 2008.

Following the official welcome by Mary Glennon, Mayor of Kildare, the Keynote Address. "Your Place and Mine" County Kildare- Recollections of the Big Houses, was given by Ger McCarthy, local historian and Chairman of the Co. Kildare federation of Local History Groups.

The minutes of the 2007 AGM were approved and the annual reports followed. In his review of the year, the Chairman, Larry Breen, said that the Commemoration of the Flight of the Earls had been the major historical event of the year and thanked the societies and members who had travelled to Donegal in September. The Federation had also re-established contact with their Ulster counterparts and a series of joint outings were being planned, a move which would be mutually beneficial. He then reported on the success of forming a county federation in Kildare, an initiative which could be replicated elsewhere as it had improved communication and helped societies make a new start.

The Secretary / Treasurer, Dermot Ryan, reported on the route taken to Donegal in September which followed the journey of O'Neill in 1607, and outlined the plans for the Federation visit to Rome in April which would replicate the final days of the journey of the Earls from Assisi to Rome in 1608. He expressed concern on the decline of the numbers taking History in Leaving Cert, which had a knock-on effect on teacher training for National Schools where the opportunity to emphasise the importance of local history might be lost. The finances of the Federation were in a healthy state with a reserve of 6,390 euro for future promotion while the annual membership covered their major costs of printing and posting the journal and events such as the AGM were run on a break even basis, with the current balance standing at 4,390 on December, 31st.

The election of officers and committee is as follows: President, Fr. Sean Doherty; Chairman, Larry Breen; Vice Chair, Pdraig Laffan; Secretary / Treasurer, Dermot Ryan; Editor, Frank Taaffe; P.R.O., Ms. Mary O'Connor; Committee, Celbridge, Maura Gallagher; Charleville, Phillip O'Connell; Clare, Myra English; Clondakin, Joe Williams; Clontarf, Kay Lonergan; Galway, Kieran Hoare; Mayo North, P.J. Lynn; Moate, Fr. Jim Murray; Old Drogheda, Betty Quinn; Rathmichael, Geoff Cotter; Slane, Mrs. Sheila Crehan; Tipperary, John Bradshaw.

In the *Society Spake* delegates spoke in favour of the concept of having more County Federations on the Kildare lines to allow for the exchange of speakers and visits, with a plea for more North-South or "twinning" of societies. Concern was expressed that the history curriculum in the teacher training colleges and universities did not seem to reflect the importance of local history and it was agreed to write to the Minister for Education. Societies also gave examples of worthwhile projects, including school visits, recording oral history, local publications, visits abroad and improved contacts with county heritage officers and local authority officials.

Lunch at Fallon's was followed by a very enjoyable visit to Palmerstown House, and the delegates then recorded a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Larry Breen, and the local society for the excellent arrangements and the facilities for the AGM.