

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland · Charity number 102927

Details

Status Received

Registered 2015-10-07

Register [View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register](#)

Contact

Address Cloughmor
Castle Hill
Rathfriland
Co Down
BT34 5nh
BT34 5NH

Phone 028 406 30602

Email rathfriland_history@outlook.com

Website www.rathfrilandhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Activities

Purposes: 1 To study and encourage public interest in the history, folklore, archaeology and antiquities of the region by: I Researching, collecting, collating and recording facts gleaned from various sources and particularly the reminiscences of residents. ii Stimulating interest in the preservation of documents, photographs and other relics relevant to local history through exhibitions. iii Organising outings to places of historic and antiquarian interest. iv Including in the annual programme lectures by experts on historical topics. v Contacting neighbouring historical groups for the mutual interchange of knowledge of the past. 2 The publication of research papers and compilation of old documents into book form.

What the charity does: The advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science

How the charity works: Cross-border/cross-community, Heritage/historical, Research/evaluation

Who the charity helps: General public

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-06-30	£2,291	£2,162	£0	0

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Ian Shannon		
Mr George James		
Mrs Dorothy James		
Mrs Margot Groves		
Noreen Smith		

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Accounts

RATHFRILAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

for the year to 30th June 2025*

OPENING BALANCE

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Cash at Danske Bank	£5,338.19		
Cash at National Savings & Investments	£1,365.60		
Cash in Hand	£198.04		
			£6,901.83

RECEIPTS

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC 2025/6	£530.00		
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC 2023/4	£93.34	£623.34	

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Membership Subscriptions	£315.00		
Visitors	£75.00		
Book Sales	£449.20		
Christmas Lunch	£220.00		
Killymoon Castle	£545.00		
Hilltown Community Association	£50.00		
National Savings & Investment Interest	£13.69	£1,667.89	£2,291.23
			£9,193.06

PAYMENTS

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Speakers		£93.34	
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UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Speakers	£96.66		
Meeting Expenses	£22.90		
Christmas Lunch	£449.00		
Killymoon Castle	£1,040.50		
F U L S - Membership and Additional Insurance	£90.00		
Loan Repayment	£50.00		
Stationery	£152.06		
Grass Cutting	£50.00		
Monthly Website Charges	£79.20		
Bank Charges	£38.42	£2,068.74	£2,162.08
			£7,030.98

REPRESENTED BY

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC	£530.00
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UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Cash at Danske Bank,	£4,872.60		
Cash at National Savings & Investments	£1,379.29		
Cash in Hand	£249.09	£6,500.98	£7,030.98

Signed on behalf of The Rathfriland Historical Society on 26th August 2025

Margot Groves M. Groves

Chair

George H James George H James

Treasurer

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Accounts

RATHFRILAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

for the year to 30th June 2024

OPENING BALANCE

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Cash at Danske Bank, NS & I and in Hand £3,952.80

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Members Loans £750.00

National Lottery Heritage Fund £6,132.38

W G Edwards Charitable Trust £185.00

£11,020.18

RECEIPTS

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Membership Subscriptions £390.00

Visitors £36.00

Book Sales £726.56

Christmas Lunch Downshire Arms £280.00

Lisburn Trip £140.00

Dinner at Anglers Rest £270.00

Sundry Donations £977.00

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC £505.00

Refund from Rathfriland Regeneration £293.51

National Savings & Investment Interest £11.74

£3,629.81

£14,649.99

PAYMENTS

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Speakers £70.00

Meetings Expenses £31.12

School Prizes £60.00

F U L S - Membership 2 years £100.00

Catering at Exhibition £62.71

Stationery £231.81

Monthly Website Charges £55.20

Bank Charges £69.94

£680.78

RESTRICTED FUNDS

National Lottery Heritage Fund NOTE 1 £6,132.38

W G Edwards Foundation NOTE 2 £185.00

Members Loans £750.00

£7,067.38

£7,748.16

£6,901.83

REPRESENTED BY

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Cash at Danske Bank, £5,338.19

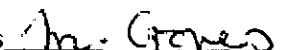
Cash at National Savings & Investments £1,365.60

Cash in Hand £198.04

£6,901.83

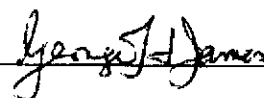
Signed on behalf of The Rathfriland Historical Society on

Margot Groves



Chair

George H James



Treasurer

RATHFRILAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

for the year to 30th June 2024

NOTES TO THE RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

1 National Lottery Heritage Fund Expenditure

50th Anniversary Events	£302.00
Town Trail Replacement & Additional Plaques	£2,160.00
WEB design and three year maintenance	£1,200.00
Travel Expenses	£76.20
Grant Evaluation	£400.00
Recording Services	£200.00
Christmas Meal	£503.75
Promotional Material	£359.98
Lisburn Trip	£832.65
Catering - part	£97.80
	<hr/>
	£6,132.38
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2 W G Edwards Charitable Fund Expenditure

Speakers	£175.00
Catering (Part)	£10.00
	<hr/>
	£185.00
	<hr/> <hr/>

- 3 The Society has no Assets other than the Bank Balance shown in the Annual Accounts
The Society has no Liabilities

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Annual report

Rathfriland Historical Society

CHARITY No. NIC102927

SECRETARY'S REPORT year ended 30th JUNE 2024

The Society's year began on Tuesday 26th September 2023 with the 50th Annual General Meeting which was held in The Parish Centre, Rathfriland. The chair, Margot Groves, welcomed all present especially Maureen Ervine our newest member.

After the formal business of the Annual General Meeting was conducted Margot introduced the speakers for the evening. Mr Brian Appleton gave a comprehensive talk on the history of the Royal British Legion. He began by pointing out the importance and symbolism of the bright red Flanders poppy which was the only plant that would grow in the fields that had been turned into mud. At the conclusion of the talk Mr Gary Gardiner, a local historian, introduced members to his extremely comprehensive collection of military memorabilia, including guns; hand grenades, knives and other articles of war.

On 5th October 2023 the Society held a very successful trip to Lisburn to visit The Irish Linen Centre in Lisburn where we saw the visiting British Museum Egyptian exhibition. We also saw the 'Flax to Fabric' exhibition and learned how the workers were so skilled in weaving the linen. On the way home a very welcome stop was made at The Angler's Rest where we all enjoyed the usual high culinary standard which has so obviously continued after covid.

The October meeting was a talk by Ciaran Conliffe who had chosen for his topic Horrible Histories. This centred on the Irish Witch trials. Members were treated to some gruesome details including burning at the stake. He mentioned that there were various witchcraft trials but the most famous were those of the Islandmagee witches in 1711.

For the November meeting we welcomed Newry historian Jason Diamond who gave a comprehensive and lengthy talk about the poetess, writer and author, Helen Waddell.

On 13th December 2023 a well-attended lunch was held in the Downshire Arms in Hilltown when 25 members and guests enjoyed a sumptuous repast of seasonal food. The craic was mighty and all who attended agreed that it was a great success.

The January 2024 meeting was a showing of the new Downton Abbey film and this was greatly enjoyed by the large audience present

Rathfriland Historical Society

CHARITY No. NIC102927

The February 2024 meeting was an Olde Tyme Music Hall event held in Chandlers House with the ever popular Strings and Sings ensemble. The MC for the evening was Mr Leonard Anderson who kept the enthusiastic audience entertained with a rich variety suitable introductions to the various participants. Also appearing on the bill were the well-known entertainer and storey teller Eileen McCusker from Hilltown and members of the Banbridge Choral Society. This event was part of our 50th Anniversary celebrations and it was made possible by grant aid from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The March meeting was a talk by Anthony Russell entitled 'Beyond the Battle, Newry and Mourne 1798. In the course of his talk Mr Russell explained how the 1798 rebellion by the United Irishmen affected the Newry and greater South Down area including Rathfriland. The rebellion had been influenced by the French Revolution and the American War of Independence.

On Tuesday 30th April our guest speaker was Hugh McShane from Newry a very prominent historian, writer of several books and an acknowledged expert on the Newry workhouse. His topic was entitled 'Australia Bound' The Female Orphans of Newry Workhouse. Between 1848 and 1850 what became known as the Earl Grey Scheme was in operation. He was the Secretary of State for the colonies and the aim of the scheme was to reduce overcrowding in the Workhouses, provide labour in Australia and reduce the big gender imbalance there. Of the 4000 plus girls sent to Australia 35 were from Newry. One of these girls, Lucy Ellis went on to marry an Australian and died aged 55 in her own home.

The National Lottery Heritage Grant of £9,942 that we had been awarded in September 2022 to be used in furtherance of our 50th anniversary celebrations has now all been spent. It was very welcome and has enabled us to hold various events and functions to a very high standard. There was the Capt. Moonlite prelaunch event held in Chandlers House and hosted by historian Jason Diamond. Following this we were able to run a two-day exhibition in Chandlers House featuring historical memorabilia pertinent to Rathfriland and its environs.

We also updated and completely reprinted the Town Trail booklets giving information on 36 points of interest in and around Rathfriland. We have replaced the existing plaques and obtained extra new plaques all complete with a QR code. New publicity material was obtained and our improved and updated website was launched.

We organised a historical trip to the Ring of Gullion which included afternoon tea and one to the Lisburn Museum which included an evening meal. We were also able to organise a Christmas celebration meal in December 2023.

Finally, we held a very well received art competition for the local primary and secondary schools.

The Rathfriland Historical Society wishes to records its very best thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for making all this possible

Dorothy

Dorothy James
SECRETARY

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Annual return

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Rathfriland Historical Society

Registered Charity Number NIC 102927

I report on the Receipts and Payments Account and the Investment Account for the year ended 30th June 2024

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and independent examiner.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 – [the Charities Act]

It is the independent examiner's responsibility to

- examine the accounts as provided for in Section 65 (2) of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland [CCNI] as provided for in Section 65 (9)(b) of the Charities Act
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention .

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

I have examined the Receipts and Payments Account [the Accounts] for the year ended 30th June 2024 as required under Section 65 (2) of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the CCNI.

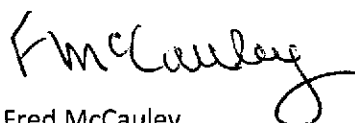
My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by you and these were compared with the Receipts and Payments Account. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the Account and where necessary seeking explanations from you concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the Accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the Accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the Accounts to be reached

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have not completed an audit but have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1.) to (4.) listed above and, in connection with following the General Directions of the CCNI, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.



Fred McCauley

Watch Commander
NIFRS, Rathfriland Station
10th September 2024

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Accounts

RATHFRILAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No NIC 102927

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2022

OPENING BANK BALANCE

Bank Balance as at 1st July 2021	
Members Loans	£750.00
AB C Council 2021-2022 Good Relations Grant	£450.00
General Funds	<u>£777.42</u>
	£1,977.42

RECEIPTS

Membership Subscriptions	£375.00
Visitors	£6.00
Sales of 'City Set on a Hill'	£320.00
W G Edwards Charitable Trust	£1,700.00
Refund from FULS	£25.00
Dinner	£110.00
Closure of Bank of Ireland Account	£3.04
Poyntzpass Trip	£170.00
Killyleagh Trip	£492.00
	<u>£3,201.04</u>
	£5,178.46

PAYMENTS

Speakers	£385.00
Federation of Ulster Local Studies -Membership	£50.00
Rent of Parish Centre	£200.00
Caretaker	£30.00
Tea and Biscuits	£20.58
Cleaning Materials	£81.80
Stationery	£124.46
Gift Token	£25.00
Bank Charges	£26.62
Poyntzpass Trip - paid by W G Edwards Charitable Trust	£334.00
Killyleagh Trip - paid by W G Edwards CharitableTrust	<u>£580.00</u>
	£1,857.46
	<u>£3,321.00</u>

REPRESENTED BY

Cash in Hand	£30.00
Bank Balance as at 30th June 2021	
Members Loans	£750.00
Dinner	£110.00
ABC Council 2021-22 Good Relations Grant	£28.59
W G Edwards Charitable Trust	£786.00
General Funds	<u>£1,616.41</u>
	£3,321.00

RATHFRILAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No NIC 102927

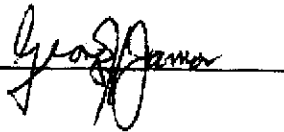
INVESTMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2021

RECEIPTS

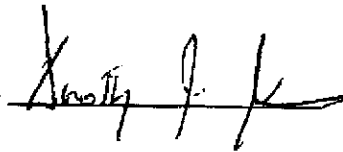
N S & I Balance as at 1st July 2021	£1,353.72
Interest	£0.14
N S & I Balance as at 30th June 2021	<u>£1,353.86</u>

Signed on behalf of Rathfriland Historical Society on 31st July 2022

George James
Treasurer



Dorothy James
Secretary



RATHFRILAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No NIC 102927

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2023

OPENING BALANCE

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Cash at Bank, N S & I and in Hand £3,000.27

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Members Loans £750.00

Dinner £110.00

AB C Council 2021-2022 Good Relations Grant £28.59

W G Edwards Charitable Trust £786.00

£4,674.86

RECEIPTS

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Membership Subscriptions £300.00

Visitors £66.00

Book Sales £533.00

Dinner £170.00

Slieve Gullion Trip £355.00 £1,424.00

RESTRICTED FUNDS

The National Lottery Heritage Fund £9,942.00 £11,366.00

£16,040.86

PAYMENTS

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Speakers £40.00

Federation of Ulster Local Studies -Membership £50.00

Meetings Expenses £55.44

Bank Charges £43.82

Dinner £580.00 £769.26

RESTRICTED FUNDS

W G Edwards Foundation

Rent of Parish Centre £120.00

Slieve Gullion Trip £481.00 £601.00

The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Town Trail Booklet £1,008.00

Display and Promotional Boards £604.80

50th Anniversary Event £1,147.42

Exhibition £890.20 £3,650.42 £4,251.42 £5,020.68

£11,020.18

REPRESENTED BY

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

Cash at Bank and in Hand £3,952.80

Members Loans £750.00 £4,702.80

RESTRICTED FUNDS

W G Edwards Charitable Trust £185.00

The National Lottery Heritage Fund £6,132.38 £6,317.38 £11,020.18

Signed on behalf of The Rathfriland Historical Society on 28 August 2023

Margot Groves 

Chair

George H James 

Treasurer

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Annual report

Secretary's Report 2021/2022

The Society's year began with our AGM. The previous management and committee apart from the Treasurers position with Marie stepping down due to health problems were elected to serve for another year. As there were no nominations for a replacement George James agreed to look after the finances meantime.

After the business was completed the re-elected Chair Margo Groves welcomed the speaker for the evening Mr Robert Trotter who gave a very interesting and informative talk on the History of the Annesley Gardens and Estate.

In October we were shocked and dismayed at the death of our Presidents wife following a short illness. She had been a long standing and faithful member of the Society since its inception. Her generous nature and willingness to help and support members and the wider community are sadly missed by everyone.

The October speaker was Mike Hartwell, a keen photographer from Killyleagh. His inspiring talk with first rate photographs showed the beauty of many local areas in Co Down during various seasons.

November speaker Tatiana Sokolskaia from Russia now living here in Rathfriland brought food for thought as she described the harsh conditions she and family members went through growing up and living in Soviet Russia before eventually moving to the West.

January brought disappointment as we had to cancel our Annual Dinner due to Covid restrictions.

In February Clive Scoular, well known historian, lecturer and writer of several books visited us once again and talked about the "Stolen Village" of Baltimore Co Cork and in March Primrose Wilson and her husband kept us enthralled with details and photos of the work of the Follies Trust.

April and May saw us embarking on two outings, firstly to Pontyzpass with Roy Copeland and secondly to Killyleagh and a visit to the well-known castle along with a bit of retail shopping.

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In conclusion I would like to thank the committees for their support over the year and you the members for coming out to the meetings for without you the Society would founder. Thanks also to Barbara for all her hard work in getting us grants to pay our way and to my husband George for keeping the books up to date. To The Parish Centre Committee for letting us use the hall for our meetings and Marie McComish, Caretaker for getting the hall ready each month.

Mr President, fellow members this concludes my report.

Secretary's Report 2022/23

Our Society's year began in September 2022 with the AGM. The President, vice president, Chair, vice Chair secretary were re-elected, George James, Noreen Smith, Catherine Fegan, Shelagh Henry and Barbara Dixon were also duly elected.

The speakers for the evening were Arlene Copeland and Ann Harper from Knock Iveagh Group who gave a very interesting talk about the Ancient Burial Ground at the Knock Hill. In October Glynn Kelso enthralled us with old maps and in November we enjoyed a talk with Una Walsh accompanied with slides of Slieve Gullion area.

In January 2023 we began our 50th Anniversary celebrations with a dinner in the Downshire Hotel, Hilltown and since then we have had a very busy year.

February saw Bronagh McAtasney from NI Digital Film screen delight us with films from their archives of the Mourne area featuring some of our own members and in March our speakers were Martina Byrne and Mary Savage from the Shared History Group and in April the life of Andrew George Scott aka Captain Moonlight was explored through music and verse in Chandlers House. Our speaker Ciaran Conliffe, blogger from Belfast had done a lot of research about Capt. Moonlight and brought many of his escapades to life.

In May our annual outing was a bus tour of the Slieve Gullion area with Una Walsh a very knowledgeable and extremely talented guide followed by light refreshments at Killeavy Castle annex.

Behind the scenes during the year Barbara, Patricia, George, Margot, Dr Shannon and myself have worked extensively on the Historical Trail Booklet first published in 2000. It has taken quite a few meetings and endless discussions before we were satisfied with the new enhanced and extended booklet. Many of the old plaques which were erected back then were showing signs of wear and tear due to

weather over the past 23 years and needed replaced. At present the new plaques with QR codes are being put in place which we hope will meet with everyone's approval. However, we still have to record the information so the general public can hear as well as read the booklet and we hope they will prove to be popular with residents and tourists alike.

All these events this year were made possible because of the generous grant from the National Heritage Grant and we are indebted to them, without their help we would not have been able to have this lasting accolade. Our thanks go to Barbara for that. I think that Rathfriland Historical Society should be very proud of what we have achieved not only with this but the fact that the Society has continued for 50 years, have published several books, now got our own webpage up and running with the help of Sam Faulds and Mark Potts 2 very helpful gentlemen who have agreed to help maintain it for the next 3 years.

My thanks to all the committee for their help and support over the past year also to Patricia, Barbara, Margot, George and Ian for all their help.

Rathfriland Historical Society

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102927

Annual return

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Rathfriland Historical Society

Registered Charity Number NIC 102927

I report on the Receipts and Payments Account and the Investment Account for the year ended 30th June 2022

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and independent examiner.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 – [the Charities Act]

It is the independent examiner's responsibility to

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Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

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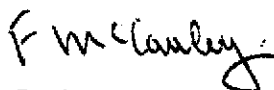
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Independent Examiner's Statement

I have not completed an audit but have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1.) to (4.) listed above and, in connection with following the General Directions of the CCNI, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.



Fred McCauley

Watch Commander
NIFRS, Rathfriland Station
4th August 2022

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Rathfriland Historical Society

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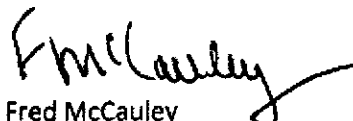
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Fred McCauley

Watch Commander
NIFRS, Rathfriland Station
28th August 2023