

Templepatrick & District Historical Society
Annual report 2023/2024

Templepatrick and District Historical Society got off to a less than auspicious start in September 2023 when we visited St John's Parish church at Donegore. It was one of the wettest Saturdays of the season and, as a result, numbers were very low. Nevertheless, John Sheldon gave his small but select audience a most interesting history of the church and affiliated members.

In October, we returned to the Old Presbyterian Church hall where representatives from Antrim and Newtownabbey council posed, then tried to answer, the question- Antrim Castle fire- was it an accident or was it arson.

As it was the one hundredth anniversary of the tragedy, this was an apt lecture, and they clearly set out the facts as known and allowed people to draw their own conclusions.

In November, Adrian Steele took the Society on a virtual stroll through old buildings along the Antrim Road, beginning in Belfast town and concluding in Templepatrick. This included a lot of social history. A notable glimpse of bygone times was the "singing in " of the Loom Mistresses in the mills.

Due to a change of plans, Damian Donaghy visited in January. His topic was the history of Drumalis House, Larne. This building has served various purposes throughout the years, and is now a Retreat House.

For our members' Night in February we invited Danny Kinahan to recall growing up in Templepatrick village and his memories of life in Castle Upton. His talk included his army career and his present job.

In March, Ron Bishop described a little known subject- " The Belgian Invasion of Ulster 1945"

Unfortunately the scheduled speaker for April did not appear and, after an initial panic, Ronnie Davis saved the day by producing a quiz previously prepared for just such an occasion. Well done Ronnie!

A big thank you to all Committee members and our loyal members.

Attendance at meetings remains low and it is difficult to recruit new people, so if you know someone who has an interest in things of the past, please invite them to one of our meetings.

We are grateful to Templepatrick Old Presbyterian church for the use of their comfortable Hall and facilities.