

HistoryHubUlster

History Hub Ulster - Trustee Annual Report

1st May 2022 to 30th April 2023

This Trustee Annual Report details our activities during the year 2022-2023.

Charity Number: NIC106993

President: Karen O'Rawe

The Committee (Trustees) Members for the year 2022-2023 were:

Chair: Gavin Bamford
Secretary: Vacant
Treasurer: Catherine Burrell

Coronavirus / Covid-19 Pandemic

2022 saw the end of the Covid-19 pandemic that had started in early 2020 resulting in many public health directions being made by local and national government. History Hub Ulster continued to present interesting talks via Zoom and YouTube together with full use of our other social media channels.

Unfortunately, our contract with the **Inniskillings Museum** continues to be severely disrupted resulting in a profound effect on our income with our annual expenditure once again exceeding our income for the year.

Activities

History Hub Ulster aim to promote and produce interesting and innovative projects and partnerships which are engaging to all members of the community, enhancing the individual's understanding of their shared heritage.

This reporting year saw the group present on the many centenaries of public war memorials being dedicated. We were able to promote, attend and present via social media on centenaries covering the Hillsborough, Crumlin, Clogher & District, Money more, County Fermanagh, Ballywalter, Coleraine, Portrush and Dungannon War Memorials - **#warmemorials100**.

Our 'live' Zoom presentations continued throughout this reporting period and were subsequently recorded, edited and published on our YouTube channel within a few days.

<https://www.youtube.com/@historyhubulster7891>.

Presentations were made on varying subjects by our members, Nigel Henderson and Peter McCabe. Further short videos were produced by Gavin Bamford. The subjects that interested our members included (in alphabetical order):

- Belfast Banking Company Limited – 1918 Property Portfolio Album
- Commuter Train from Comber to Newcastle via Downpatrick using Google Earth
- Fifty Footballers
- Somme Memorials in Dundonald Cemetery
- Stranmillis College and the Second World War
- The Princess Victoria Disaster – 70 Years On
- Ulsterville Presbyterian Church – A History in Memorials
- War Memorial Centenaries series – Hillsborough, Crumlin, Clogher, Moneymore, County Fermanagh, Ballywalter, Coleraine, Portrush and Dungannon
- War-related Graves in Carrickfergus

As restrictions ended, members organised public walks in Carrickfergus and Dundonald cemeteries.

Members attended other groups activities that included the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society (W J Barre), Donegal County Museum (Battle of Pettigo & Belleek Centenary), Belfast City Cemetery Visitors Centre (introduction to), Bushmills and the War, Campbell College Archives, Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum (Army Museums in NI), PRONI (Belfast Central Railway) and Translink (Lisburn Area Track Renewals).

Our project ‘Friends of Neill’s Hill Railway Station’ continues to interest users of the Comber Greenway. We are pleased that the **Department for Infrastructure** have now installed red spectrum lighting on the greenway. Seating at various locations is still awaited from **Belfast City Council**.

Throughout the year we have continued to make use of our website and social media as a signpost educating and sharing information from like-minded organisations, groups and partners.

Our book ‘Ulster War Memorials from History Hub Ulster’ which highlights unusual, hidden and missing War Memorials around the Province of Ulster is still available. Copies can be obtained via our Facebook page or our website.

Our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@historyhubulster7891>) now has 88 videos, 70k views and 563 subscribers as at 30th April 2023 (report date). 16 videos were posted during this reporting year. The channel is discussed in the ‘activities’ section above.

We continue to share interesting and innovative articles on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/HistoryHubUlster> and via our Twitter account @historyulster

Our popular posts on Facebook have included:

- >22k reach – Lagan Valley Hospital ‘1920s Peace Trees’
- >18k reach – ‘War Veteran’s Child’, RNAS Sydenham
- >18k reach – Commuter Train from Comber to Newcastle via Downpatrick
- >17k reach – Patricia Curran Murder – 70th Anniversary
- >16k reach – Belfast Banking Company Limited – Buildings video

- >15k reach – BBC Ards TT including aerial photographs from ‘Britain from Above’ website
- >12k reach – Northern Banking Company Limited, Newtownstewart Murder
- >12k reach – Ladies Football. A Belfast Telegraph Euro 22 Supplement article
- >12k reach – Dalchoolin House
- >11k reach – ‘New War Room’ at Stormont Castle
- >8k reach – Centenary of Stranmillis College
- >7k reach – Links to our centenary talks about War Memorials Centenaries

Our webpage, www.historyhubulster.co.uk is for articles written mainly by our members and invited guest authors. It has a worldwide audience of over 7k readers of which over 2.5k live in the United Kingdom. It is promoted via our Facebook page. During this reporting period, we have published informative articles on such diverse subjects as:

- A Short History of 32 to 38 Queen Street, Belfast
- Wartime Aircraft Tragedy at RAF Aldergrove
- Dalchoolin, A History
- County Fermanagh War Memorial
- Belfast Banking Company Limited – A Branch Study Report
- Three Towns, Three Counties, Three War Memorials
- Heroes of the Belfast Blitz
- Belfast Blitz Plaques

We continue to extend our invitation to guest authors to send us suitable articles.

Our partnership with newspapers continues with articles submitted to and published in the **News Letter ‘The Roamer’** page.

We continue to promote and produce interesting and innovative projects and partnerships which are engaging to all members of the community whilst also enhancing the individual

Our members continue to add to their websites and Facebook pages/groups:

[Belfast Paper and Ephemera](#) Facebook

[Belfast Shipyard of Workman, Clark](#) webpage

[Castleton Lanterns](#) webpage & [Facebook](#)

[Eddies Extracts](#) webpage & [Facebook](#)

[Family Photos of Old Northern Ireland](#) Facebook

[Friends of Neill’s Hill Railway Station](#) Facebook

[Great War Ulster Newspaper Archive](#) Facebook

[Homes for Heroes NI \(1921 to 1939\)](#) Facebook

[Missing War Memorials in Ulster](#) a History Hub Ulster Facebook page

[Northern Bank War Memorials](#) webpage & [Facebook](#)

[Ulster Bank War Memorials](#) webpage & [Facebook](#)

[Ulster War Memorials](#) a History Hub Ulster Facebook page

[William J English VC](#) webpage

[Workman Clark in the Great War](#) Facebook

[WW1 Research Ireland](#) webpage & [Facebook](#)

In addition to the above websites and Facebook pages/groups, our members own projects include cemetery tours with Nigel Henderson, Richard Graham and Peter McCabe; talks by Nigel Henderson and Richard Graham; books on cemeteries by Peter McCabe; blitz tours with Nigel Henderson; and historic railway infrastructure with Gavin Bamford and Eddie Connolly (*Friends of Neill's Hill Railway Station*).

We are pleased to support our associate member Peter McCabe with the gift of ISBNs for his books:

- 2020: 20 Graves from 20 different cemeteries
- Roselawn 2021
- Fifty Footballers

As a group, History Hub Ulster funds subscriptions to various research sites to which all its members have access. These have proved invaluable to our members' ability to research cases for their own projects as well as our History Hub Ulster contracted cases and also the individual research undertaken on behalf of members of the public.

Financial Reserves Policy

No awards were granted in this reporting year under our 'Reserves Funding Award' policy.

Summary

2022/23 has been our 9th year in operation and my 6th year as Chair. The group continues to be a trusted source that can deliver accurate research on many subjects. We take pride in offering voluntary and commercial research to individuals and groups alike.

Once again it has been a difficult year with less money around and project funding very much reduced in the community. We envisage many further cutbacks in government and council community budgets in 2023 and beyond.

Never the less, the History Hub Ulster team have continued to provide a great deal of research information to the public along with interesting articles found on various social media platforms and newspapers alike.

Finally, on a personal note, I wish to thank the team for their support during the year. Please keep yourselves and your families safe.

Gavin Bamford
Chair, History Hub Ulster
27th June 2023

While it has not been an easy year for History Hub Ulster, the group continues to maintain a reputation for excellent research and relevant content. Congratulations on ensuring that well researched historical information is still being shared and appreciated across social media and 'in the field'. As the organisation moves forward and experiences new challenges, it is your ability to work together as a team to suggest new projects and find relevant histories that will keep History Hub Ulster relevant and interesting.

I want to thank the committee and members for all their work over the past year and hope to see you all later in 2023.

Karen O'Rawe
Honorary President, History Hub Ulster
13th July 2023