

# Bellaghy Historical Society

Northern Ireland · Charity number 107295

## Details

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**Status** Received

**Registered** 2020-06-22

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

## Contact

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**Address** 2 Sherbourne Park  
Magherafelt  
BT45 6jr  
BT45 6JR

**Phone** 07900808872

**Email** [bellaghyhs@gmail.com](mailto:bellaghyhs@gmail.com)

**Website** [www.bellaghyhistoricalsociety.co.uk](http://www.bellaghyhistoricalsociety.co.uk)

## Activities

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**Purposes:** The aims and objectives of the Society shall be to promote education, knowledge and understanding of local, national and international history and will undertake to promote these aims and objectives through:

- The provision and promotion of equal opportunities for the membership for activities undertaken by the Society regardless of religious belief, political opinion, race, age, marital status or sexual orientation, men and women generally, persons with a disability and persons without and persons with dependents and persons without;
- The pursuance of original research that is made available to all;
- The sharing of information amongst the members of the Society so as to add to the body of knowledge;
- The organisation of talks and other educational events that will provide members and the general public with relevant information, knowledge or skills to pursue individual or group research;
- Developing and delivering a programme of talks and activities on topics relevant to the history of the area of Bellaghy, Ireland and worldwide but with a particular focus on historical events and characters that have impacted on the locality of Bellaghy and its people;
- Building a local archive of documents (or photocopies of documents), illustrations and artefacts relating to the local history of Bellaghy and the surrounding area;
- Arranging guided local history walks in Bellaghy and surrounding area;
- The collection and recording of oral histories;
- Mounting exhibitions of an historical nature;
- Creating and maintaining an internet Bellaghy Historical Society website;
- The publication of a range of books, leaflets and resource materials relating to the local history of the area;
- Acting as a resource for material and information for schools, libraries, media, museums etc;
- Engagement with any and all other organisations from the Bellaghy area and surrounding district that have a shared interest in the promotion of the area, its history and people;
- The extension of any of the above and developing additional activities as opportunities arise.

**What the charity does:** The advancement of education

**How the charity works:** Cultural,Education/training,Heritage/historical,Research/evaluation

**Who the charity helps:** General public

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees	
2026-03-31		£632	£415	£0	0
2025-03-31		£869	£979	£0	0

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Mr George Mcintyre		
Mr Patrick Brennan		
Mr Peter Mckenna		
Mr Richard Keenan		
Mr Seamus Mcerlean		
Mrs Georgina Hammond		
Mrs Kathleen Mckenna		
Mrs Linda O'boyle		

**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Accounts

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Bellaghy Historical Society - 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026						
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>2026</u></b>			<b><u>2025</u></b>		
Door Takings	632.00			869.00		
MUDC Grants						
		632.00			869.00	
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>						
Speakers	300.00			455.00		
Room Hire	0.00			0.00		
CWSAN	0.00			0.00		
Tea, biscuits, etc	29.00			40.00		
Accounts Auditing	0.00					
Stationary/Stamps	0.00			50.00		
Website	0.00			174.80		
Printing	0.00			102.00		
Charity Commission	0.00			20.00		
Flowers	0.00			40.00		
Bank Charges	86.32			97.56		
		415.32			979.36	
	<b><u>BANK ACCOU NT</u></b>			<b><u>BANK ACCOU NT</u></b>		

Rec. Bal. at 01/04/25	£1,717.19	1/4/24	£1,827.55
+ Income	632.00		869.00
- Expenditure	-415.32		-979.36
Rec. Bal. at 30/03/26	1933.87	30/3/25	1717.19
<b>Bank Balance at 30/03/26:</b>	<b>£1,933.87</b>		<b>£1,717.19</b>
<b>Assets:</b>			
Circular Cartridge (Projection Slides)			
100 slides / plus Word Document (Pictures of Bellaghy)			
Pendrive (digitised pictures of Bellaghy / various talks)			
Rollup Banner - Bellaghy Historical Society			
Book - Architects of Ulster 1920's - 1970's by Paul Larmour (2022)			

**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Accounts

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**Bellaghy Historical Society**  
**Financial Report from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025**

<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Door Takings	869.00	716.00
MUDC Grants	0.00	477.59
	869.00	1193.59
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
Speakers	455.00	460.00
Room Hire	0.00	0.00
CWSAN	20.00	20.00
Refreshments	40.00	41.00
Accounts Auditing	0.00	20.00
Stationary/Stamps	50.00	65.65
Website	174.80	0.00
Bank Charges	97.56	120.55
Printing	102.00	
Flowers	40.00	
	979.36	727.20
<b><u>BANK ACCOUNT</u></b>		
Rec. Bal. at 01/04/24	£1,827.55	01/05/23: £1,343.16
+ Income	+869.00	+ Income +1,193.59
- Expenditure	-979.36	- Expenditure -727.20
Rec. Bal. at 31/03/25	1717.19	30/04/24 1809.55
<b>Bank Balance at 31/03/25:</b>	<b>£1,717.19</b>	<b>Bank Balance £1,809.55</b>
<b><u>ASSETS</u></b>		
Circular Cartridge (Projection Slides)		
100 Slides plus Word Document (Pictures of Bellaghy)		
Pendrive (Digitalised Pictures of Bellaghy / Various Talks)		
Banner Stand (Bellaghy Historical Society)		

Table 1

Table 1				



**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Accounts

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## Bellaghy Historical Society Financial Report 2023/2024

<u><b>INCOME</b></u>	<u><b>2024</b></u>	<u><b>2023</b></u>
Door Takings	716.00	444.00
MUDC Grants	477.59	0.00
	1193.59	444.00
 <u><b>EXPENDITURE</b></u>		
Speakers	460.00	215.00
Room Hire	0.00	0.00
CWSAN	20.00	
Tea, biscuits, etc	41.00	15.00
Accounts Auditing	20.00	
Stationary/Stamps	65.65	
Website	0.00	0.00
Camera Plus	0.00	240.00
Bank Charges	120.55	84.37
	727.20	554.37
 <u><b>BANK ACCOUNT</b></u>		
Rec. Bal. at 01/05/23	£1,343.16	1/5/22 £1,453.53
+ Income	+1,193.59	+444.00
- Expenditure	-727.20	-554.37
Rec. Bal. at 30/04/24	1809.55	30/4/23 1343.16
<b>Bank Balance at 30/04/24:</b>	<b>£1,809.55</b>	30/4/23 <b>£1,343.16</b>
 <b>Assets:</b>		
Circular Cartridge (Projection Slides)		
100 slides / plus Word Document (Pictures of Bellaghy)		
Pendrive (digitised pictures of Bellaghy / various talks)		



**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Annual report

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**BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
TRUSTEE REPORT  
2023 - 2024**

**Establishment and Objectives**

Bellaghy Historical Society is a voluntary organisation, established in 2000 to promote education, knowledge and understanding of local, national and international history.

This objective is achieved through

- The provision and promotion of equal opportunities for the membership for activities undertaken by the Society regardless of religious belief, political opinion, race, age, marital status or sexual orientation, men and women generally, persons with a disability and persons without and persons with dependents and persons without;
- The pursuance of original research that is made available to all;
- The sharing of information amongst the members of the Society so as to add to the body of knowledge;
- The organisation of talks and other educational events that will provide members and the general public with relevant information, knowledge or skills to pursue individual or group research;
- Developing and delivering a programme of talks and activities on topics relevant to the history of the area of Bellaghy, Ireland and worldwide but with a particular focus on historical events and characters that have impacted on the locality of Bellaghy and its people;
- Building a local archive of documents (or photocopies of documents), illustrations and artefacts relating to the local history of Bellaghy and the surrounding area;
- Arranging guided local history walks in Bellaghy and surrounding area;
- The collection and recording of oral histories;
- Mounting exhibitions of an historical nature;
- Creating and maintaining an internet Bellaghy Historical Society website;
- The publication of a range of books, leaflets and resource materials relating to the local history of the area;
- Acting as a resource for material and information for schools, libraries, media, museums etc;
- Engagement with any and all other organisations from the Bellaghy area and surrounding district that have a shared interest in the promotion of the area, it's history and people;
- The extension of any of the above and developing additional activities as opportunities arise.

**Activity**

The Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month between October and May in the Old School House, Castle Street, Bellaghy when guest speakers are invited to present to members on a varied range of topics of historical interest.

Members of the Society were saddened to learn of the death in April 2024 of Mrs Patricia Lowry, one of the founding members of the Society. Mrs Lowry was noted for her boundless energy and enthusiasm for local history and it is testimony to her and all her efforts and encouragement that the Society will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024

A full programme of lectures was delivered (October 2023 to May 2024), details of which are included below.

The Society's AGM took place on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024, minutes of which are available.

Seamus McErlean continues to hold both the role of Chairperson and Secretary which he has indicated is demanding and needs to be considered further at the next meeting of the committee (August 2024, date to be agreed).

Dermot Keenan has indicated his intension to withdraw from his role as member of the committee for personal reasons. However, a decision about his replacement was not taken at the AGM (14<sup>th</sup> May 2024). This may be reconsidered by the committee at a later date.

A new website has been developed and can be accessed at:

Website: [www.bellaghyhistoricalsociety.co.uk](http://www.bellaghyhistoricalsociety.co.uk)

Email: [bellaghyhs@gmail.com](mailto:bellaghyhs@gmail.com)

**This report has been compiled on behalf of the Committee of the Bellaghy Historical Society by its chairperson Seamus McErlean**



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Seamus McErlean (Mr)  
Chairperson  
Bellaghy Historical Society  
2 Sherbourne Park  
Magherafelt  
BT45 6JR

# BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2023 - 2024

All talks commence at 8.00pm, Old School House, Castle Street, Bellaghy

<b>October Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Mills in NI (South Derry) Sebastian Graham
<b>November Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	The History of Lowering Lough Neagh - When, Why and How? Dr Liam Campbell
<b>December Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	Local Townlands Thomas McErlean
<b>January Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	The Earliest Evidence for Farming in Ireland Brendan Gormley
<b>February Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Archaeology of the A6 Road Scheme Dungiven to Drumahoe Jonathan Barkley
<b>March Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	Pictures of Bellaghy George McIntyre
<b>April Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	United Irishmen and South Derry: Exploring the 1798 Leaders from South Derry and what really happened Stephen McCracken
<b>May Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	Why the Emergency - and a Double Agent - Really! Clive Scoular

**ADMISSION:** £4 (including refreshments)

**CHAIRPERSON:** Seamus McErlean

# BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING

## MINUTES - 1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2023

### 1. Welcome

#### Present

Seamus McErlean (chair)  
Linda Boyle  
Ena Hammond  
Kathleen McKenna  
George McIntyre  
Pat Brennan

#### Apologies

Peter McKenna

#### Absent

Richard Keenan  
Dermot Keenan

### 2. Minutes 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022

The minutes of the last Committee meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022 were read and agreed as being an accurate record of the meeting.

### 3. Matters Arising

- **Secretarial Support** - it had been agreed at the previous meeting that Seamus would assume the role of chairperson and secretary. This was endorsed by members at the AGM on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- **Accommodation / Venue** - following the previous meeting, enquiries were made into the possibility of obtaining another venue in which to hold meetings (there was speculation that the Old School by be taken over as a business enterprise). The hire costs of HomePlace were considered to be prohibitive (in excess of the Society's budget) and no other suitable spaces was found to be available (Bawn / Church / Community venues)
- **Website** - this issue is addressed at item 7 below
- **Lecture Programme** - Seamus updated members on some of the challenges of printing and distributing the lecture programme. The printing issue has been resolved (Seamus will print posters). Linda has agreed to distribute posters to all business and similar outlets in Bellaghy.

- **Engagement with Churches (membership)** - there had been much discussion at the previous meeting about the significant reduction of members from both the Church of Ireland and Presbyterian churches and it was agreed that Seamus would pursue this issue. Seamus advised that despite his efforts to make contact with representatives of both churches, he'd had no response from either. The parish secretary of the Catholic church includes details of lectures in the weekly bulletin.

**Action:** After discussion, it was agreed that one church contact may be Richard Frew. Members were asked to provide a contact address and / or telephone number for Richard and that Seamus would make contact with him

#### **4. Review of 2022/23 Lecture Programme**

Members reviewed and discussed the content of the 2022/23 lecture programme. Aside from the difficulties with heating and the inclement weather, the programme was considered to have been a success, most notably Thomas McErlean's talk on Church Island (March 2023 with attracted 42 attendees) and George McIntyre's presentation on Pictures of Bellaghy (December 2022 which had few attendees due to the weather but nevertheless generated considerable discussion and interaction with those present). It was agreed that George's presentation should be repeated when it is hoped that more members may be able to attend.

The presentation by Jonathan Barkley (February 2023 on the excavation / archaeology of the A6 Toome to Castledawson) was also considered to be a highlight and members noted that Jonathan is scheduled to return in February 2024 when he will present on the excavation / archaeology of the A^ from Dungiven to Drumahoe.

The April 2023 talk by Roland Spottiswoode on the Spottiswoode Family in Ireland and the May 2023 lecture on FJ Bigger and the Irish Language by Stiofán ÓDireáin were both well received. Both talks were considered to be informative, well researched and the speakers highly knowledgeable. There were suggestions that given the volume of material, there may have been space for each lecture to be presented over two sessions.

Other presentations, Maura Johnston (November 2022 on local language and dialects entitled From Aftergrass to Yellow Boots) and Clive Scoular (December 2022 on the War of Independence, Civil War and the Impact on NI) were also regarded as having been interesting and successful presentations.

The Committee noted observations / comments from attendees during the course of the year regarding the quality of the projection of presentations and seat lay-out. These comments are noted and steps taken to address same. This matter will be kept under review

## 5. Funding Update

Seamus updated members on his application to the Mid-Ulster Council regarding funding. The application had covered (i) the updating, maintenance and sustainability of the Society's website and (ii) funding of the lecture programme.

In total, Seamus had submitted a funding request for £3,500-£4,000. Applicants had been advised by Council that due to financial challenges and difficulties at Stormont, funding would be significantly reduced. In the end, the Society has received funding of £750 which will cover the lecture programme but decisions will have to be made regarding the future of the website (see item 7 below).

## 6. Annual Fees

A decision had been taken last year in the light of the current economic recession to change the arrangements for annual fees / admission fee. The arrangement whereby members paid an annual fee (£10 if in employment and £5 for others - students, persons over 65 years) was abolished and the admission fee (previously £1 members / £3 non-members) was set at £3 for everyone (this included attendance at the lecture and refreshments).

After some discussion, it was agreed by members to increase the admission fee to £4 for everyone. Annual fees would still not apply.

## 7. Website Update

Seamus provided an update on discussions with the Society's website designer regarding (i) updating the site, (ii) maintenance, (iii) training, (iv) hosting and (iv) domain fees.

Hosting and domain fees (even if the site was not updated) will cost £300 over 5 years i.e., £30 each for hosting and domain name per annum paid for 5 years in advance.

Updating the site, adding lecture notes, responding to emails from people searching their family roots, ensuring that all information is up to date (sections are currently 7 years out of date) and the provision of training for members would cost between £2,000 and £2,500.

The hosting / domain name expires on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

Given the cost of restoring / maintaining the site, members agreed that regrettably, the site should be closed. Seamus advised that he had saved all the information from the site as Word Documents as they may be useful in future in some format.

There was discussion about using Facebook as a way of raising awareness of the Society and its activities.

**Action:** Seamus to contact the web designer and advise him that the site is to be closed.

**Action:** Seamus to explore the possibility of Facebook and will liaise with George (original site builder) to consider options for the Society

## **8. Draft Programme 2023/24**

Draft programme for 2023/24 was circulated and discussed.

March and April (2024) have still to be completed and some further discussions with presenters will be necessary e.g., regarding title and content of presentation and fees.

The possible speaker for March / April had not responded to communications from Seamus however, if he does and arrangements can be agreed, George McIntyre has agreed to fill the remaining slot with his presentation on Pictures of Bellaghy (first delivered in December 2022).

There was discussion about ending the season in April (as opposed to May) and perhaps starting in September (as opposed to October). It was felt that this would require further discussion with the wider membership and views sought.

**Action:** Discussion to be held with membership regarding the duration of the lecture season.

Seamus has had some discussions with Cathy Brown about a future joint event with Seamus Heaney HomePlace (possibly in 2024 to fit with the HomePlace schedule).

Possible themes / topics for the joint event (which needs to cover history, literature, culture) include:

- Traditional music
- A Band
- Irish / Scottish music
- DNA (former speaker at HomePlace - world leader in DNA research / ancestry)
- Vikings
- John Scullion (world drumming champion)

**Action:** Members to share any ideas with Seamus in advance of his meeting with Cathy (a date for which has not been set yet).

## **9. AoB**

**Date of Next Meeting** - to be agreed (depending on content and distribution of programme)

**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Annual return

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Charity Trustees of Bellaghy Historical Society.

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, which are detailed and attached.

Respective responsibilities of Charity Trustees and Examiner:

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to: Examine the Accounts under Section 65 of the Charities Act.

Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Commission under 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 your Charity Accounts as required under Section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under Section 65 (9) (B) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the Accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Charity Trustees 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 completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Name: Josephine M'Guera

Address: 61 Foxfield Park, Magherafelt, BT45 5FO

Date: 18-06-24

**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Accounts

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**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Annual report

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**BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
TRUSTEE REPORT  
2022 - 2023**

**Establishment and Objectives**

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- Arranging guided local history walks in Bellaghy and surrounding area;
- The collection and recording of oral histories;
- Mounting exhibitions of an historical nature;
- Creating and maintaining an internet Bellaghy Historical Society website;
- The publication of a range of books, leaflets and resource materials relating to the local history of the area;
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- The extension of any of the above and developing additional activities as opportunities arise.

**Activity**

The Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month between October and May in the Old School House, Castle Street, Bellaghy when guest speakers are invited to present to members on a varied range of topics of historical interest.

Due to the Covid pandemic, there was no activity from March 2020 until October 2022.

Society Secretary (Ciara Ni Gabhan) resigned from the role in April 2022 due to family and work commitments.

The Chairperson of the Society (Seamus McErlean) took on the role of Secretary as an interim measure until an appointment could be made at an AGM (scheduled May 2023).

In August 2022, Committee Member (Margaret Evans) resigned from her role on the committee as she had moved to live elsewhere.

Committee Member (Phil Scullion) resigned from her role on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 due to family commitments.

A full programme of lectures was drawn up by the Chairperson for the 2022-23 season (see below for details)

The AGM is held in May of each year however, due to Covid restrictions, this was not possible in May 2022. The existing Committee (elected May 2019) remained in post and met on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022 (see below for details) in advance of the start of the 2022-23 programme.

The AGM of the Society was held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Minutes of that meeting are available for examination.

**This report has been compiled on behalf of the Committee of the Bellaghy Historical Society by its chairperson Seamus McErlean**



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Seamus McErlean (Mr)  
Chairperson  
Bellaghy Historical Society  
2 Sherbourne Park  
Magherafelt  
BT45 6JR

# **BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**2022 - 2023**

<b>October Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup></b>	A Brief History of Pandemics Seamus McErlean
<b>November Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	From Aftergrass to Yellow Boots Maura Johnston
<b>December Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Pictures of Bellaghy Seamus McErlean
<b>January Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	War of Independence, The Civil War and the Impact on Northern Ireland Clive Scoular
<b>February Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	Archaeology of the A6 Road Scheme Jonathan Barkley
<b>March Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	Church Island: 6 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Thomas McErlean
<b>April Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup></b>	The Spottiswoode Family of Ireland Roland Spottiswoode
<b>May Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Francis Joseph Bigger and the Irish Language Stiofán ÓDireáin

**All talks to commence at 8.00pm, Old School House, Castle Street, Bellaghy**

**BELLAGHY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES - 23<sup>RD</sup> AUGUST 2022**

**Present**

Seamus McErlean (Chair)  
Pat Brennan (Treasurer)  
Kathleen McKenna  
Mary Craig  
Ena Hammond  
George McIntyre

**Apologies**

Margaret Evans (Seamus explained that Margaret had moved to live in Portstewart and would no longer be able to attend meetings)

**1. Secretarial Support**

Seamus and Pat updated members on the situation regarding the post of secretary. Ciara had met with Seamus and Pat earlier in the summer and advised that due to family and work commitments, she would no longer be available to take on the role of secretary.

**ACTION:** It was agreed that:

- Seamus would take over this role until a replacement was agreed (which may not happen until the next scheduled AGM in May 2023)

**2. Venue**

Pat informed members that the premises were now under new management and that there was a possibility of the meetings room no longer being available.

**ACTION:** After some discussion, it was agreed that:

- Seamus would explore the possibility of acquiring a room at (i) Homeplace, (ii) the Bawn or (iii) other centre locally
- Pat to discuss with members of the Bellaghy Development Group possible arrangements for the continued use of the existing facilities (including access to kitchen and toilet areas)

**3. Bellaghy Historical Society Website**

Seamus advised that despite the considerable efforts that had been put into the development of the website, it had not been maintained (notes of lectures had not been added and correspondence not answered or processed) and was as much as five years out of date.

Seamus indicated that the website was to be the flagship for the society and funding had been made available from the local council to develop it initially. He also advised that training had been provided by the web developer but that this had been ineffective for a number of reasons.

**ACTION:** It was agreed that:

- Seamus would speak to the developer and acquire a price for training and updating.
- Subject to costs, Seamus would seek permission from the committee to fund whatever was necessary to have the site fully updated and operational.

#### **4. Financial Position**

Pat provided detailed updates of expenditure (April to March for 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22) and fielded a number of questions from members.

There was discussion about the state of the accounts (£1453.53 at March 2022) which although significant, are unlikely to be enough to sustain activities for the longer term.

Members discussed admission costs and membership fees, the cost of venue and refreshments and the cost of speakers. The current economic climate was regarded as an important factor as all costs were rising.

Suggestions for fund raising included:

- Re-publication of the booklet 'Life in the Past' although it was noted that there may not be sufficient funding to publish 800 copies and even if the decision to publish went ahead, it would take a considerable length of time to sell that many books and realise the profits. Furthermore, many people would not want to purchase a book that did not include major updates (that would require considerable re-writing and new writing).
- Funding may be available from the Council but the committee would have to be very explicit about what the funding was to be used for.

**ACTION:** After discussion about membership fees and admission costs, it was agreed that as a first step:

- The membership fee (£5 p/a retired members and students and £10 for members in employment) will be abolished and a single admission fee of £3 will be charged (currently the admission fee is £1)

#### **5. Book 'We Remember...Bellaghy'**

Seamus received copies of a booklet (collated by the poet and writer Maura Johnston) entitled 'We Remember...Bellaghy: Memories of Bellaghy as told by Local People in their own Words' from Sean Henry (Mid-Ulster Council) during the initial lockdown period. Sean had asked if these could be distributed to members of the Society.

Copies were distributed to those present and the remainder will be distributed at the first scheduled event of the Society on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

## **6. Lecture Programme 2022-23**

Seamus circulated the lecture programme for 2022-23 to members and took them through the plans for the various talks and presenters. Members expressed their satisfaction with the range of speakers and content.

Distribution of the programme to members will be challenging, in terms of (i) travel costs to physically deliver the programme, (ii) postage costs and (iii) due to gaps in the membership list.

The programme has already been emailed to some members and members were able to take some copies for circulation to members with whom they would be in contact.

Seamus has developed a 'membership form' and proposed that everyone attending lectures or wishing to be included in receiving information about the programme or activities, should complete same. The form includes a request for an email address. All communication should be by email going forward.

**ACTION:** Seamus will:

- Speak to Richard about the development and erection of posters.
- Find contacts for the three churches so that details of lectures can be added to church bulletins or given as announcements at services.

## **7. Setting Up Facilities**

Ena requested assistance with setting up the venue in advance of lectures. Kathleen, Mary and Seamus agreed to help.

The key to the property can be accessed at Muldoons

**Bellaghy Historical Society**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 107295

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# Annual return

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Charity Trustees of Bellaghy Historical Society

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are detailed and attached.

Respective responsibilities of Charity Trustees and Examiner:

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to: Examine the Accounts under Section 65 of the Charities Act.

Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Commission under 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 your Charity Accounts as required under Section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under Section 65 (9) (B) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the Accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Charity Trustees 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 completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Name: *Jeane Mc Guekin*

Address: *61 Foxfield Park, Magherafelt BT45 5FQ*

Date: *30-05-2023*