

# **Fermanagh Talking Newspaper Association**

## **Chairperson's Report April 2022 – March 2023**

I take this opportunity to highlight the events of the Fermanagh Talking Newspaper Association (FTNA) and to acknowledge all those involved in the production of the weekly TN. This has been made possible by the commitment of the many volunteers ably managed by a dedicated committee.

The full production of the weekly newspaper i.e. the recording and copying is now carried out in the Recording Studio in the Drumcoo Day Centre along with the administration of the service managed by Philomena Mulligan. Approximately 100 people in the Fermanagh and Tyrone areas are registered to receive the weekly recording.

During the year a number of new readers were recruited along with Eric Humphreys who is currently training as a technician. We are indebted to the technicians (Herbie, Eugene and Robbie) and reading teams coordinated by Una Lunny who arrive at the recording studio on a Thursday to read the news from the two local newspapers.

Following on from the presentation of the Queen's Award in 2022 Philomena Mulligan and Marion McLaughlin represented FTNA at the Queen's Award Garden Party in Edinburgh in June 2022.

During the summer months Jim McCourt, reader and committee member did a series of interviews with local people, these were included in the TN and enjoyed by many.

In the autumn of 2022, the committee organised a "Get Together" where the readers and technicians met with the management committee and recipients. This provided an opportunity for all to appreciate the work being done, to share ideas and look at ways to improve on the service.

Distribution of the weekly recordings was somewhat disrupted at the end of 2022 due to the Royal Mail Postal Workers strike. Pauline and Philomena found ways to provide continuity of the service, at times hand delivering the TN to local recipients.

In February/March 2023 a survey was carried out to determine the usage of the weekly production and the results have been acted upon. Much appreciation is expressed to all those who gave their time to this task.

Sincere thanks are due to the Proprietors and Editorial Staff of the Impartial Reporter and the Fermanagh Herald for allowing FTNA to record articles from the print editions of their weekly newspapers and to the postal workers who deliver the yellow pouches through the letterbox.

Let us not forget those who support the Association: the Western Health and Social Care Trust, the staff and service users in the Drumcoo Day Centre, the auditors, MacNeary & Rasdale, Enniskillen and in particular the Sensory Team who refer the Talking Newspaper to their clients and support to the Association in other ways.

Finally, I wish to record thanks to my colleagues on the Executive Committee for their dedicated support; I hope that they may continue to be fulfilled by this unselfish commitment to the visually impaired members of our community.

Pauline Flanagan  
Chairperson