

The Glens of Antrim Historical Society
Chairman's Report for the year 1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023

After the pandemic restrictions of the years 2020 and 2021, thankfully the planned activities of The Glens Historical Society for 2022/2023 returned to their normal pattern. The usual monthly lectures in St Mary's Parish Centre, Cushendall, commenced in April when Dr Anne Casement gave an illustrated talk on "The Coast of County Antrim through the Eyes of Lord Mark Kerr."

In May, on their annual day out, 24 members of the Society visited Glenarm for a guided walking tour of the village, learning about various historic buildings and sites. The walk ended with passing through the famous Barbican Gate and on to Glenarm Castle, where a guided tour of some of the main rooms was given by the owner himself, Randal, Earl of Antrim. This most enjoyable day out concluded with lunch in the restaurant and a tour of the Castle gardens.

After the summer break, in September 2022 the Annual General Meeting of the Society took place, followed by musical entertainment and the launch of Volume 49 of the Society's annual journal, *The Glynnns*. The Society was delighted to receive generous financial sponsorship towards the cost of this issue by Mr Michael McKillop of the Glens of Antrim Distillery.

Monthly lectures resumed in October 2022, when Alison McCaughan spoke on the subject "1718 – the first Mass Migration from Ireland to America" and in November Paddy McLaughlin gave a detailed "History of Lifeboats in Cushendall" appropriately this being their 75th anniversary. The planned lecture for January 2023 unfortunately had to be cancelled, due to severe weather conditions, something not unusual in the Glens. In February 2023, Bernie Frayne's talk took the audience on a nostalgic trip back to the days of "Ballycastle and the Showbands" and in March Dr Desmond McCabe spoke about "The Potential of the Public Record Office NI in Researching Local History."

On 14th March 2023, in Sheskburn Recreation Centre, Ballycastle, a special event took place to pay tribute to the late Frank Rogers, a past Chairrman of the Society, past editor of *The Glynnns*, presenter of many illustrated talks to the Society, and frequent contributor of articles to *The Glynnns*. This event was jointly organised by the Society, Ballycastle Probus Club, and Glens and Dalriada U3A, as Frank had been a member of all three groups. Frank's last planned presentation, "Songs and Poems of County Antrim" included poetry readings, songs by the U3A choir and powerpoint photographs with commentary. The event was attended by over one hundred people and guests of honour were five members of the late Frank's family.

Committee meetings continued as required during the course of the year to oversee the business of the Society and to plan for future events. In the course of these meetings one member of the committee resigned and two new members were co-opted. Members of the committee are focused on ensuring that The Glens of Antrim Historical Society remains healthy, active and very much in the public view. To this end, two future developments are being planned, firstly an expanded 50th anniversary edition of *The Glynnns* to be launched in September 2023 and secondly a special book, planned for 2025, to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Society in the year 1965.

As this report suggests, the Society continues to function very successfully.

Leonard Quigg, Chairman

