

CHAIR'S REPORT 2023/2024

The Society's 2023/2024 season commenced with the AGM on 15 September, 2023 in which there were changes within the committee. Leonard Quigg stepped down as Chair following a period of four years service, the extra year being due to Covid-19 halting normal business. He was thanked for his excellent execution of the role, and was wished well for the future as the Society's new Treasurer. The outgoing Treasurer, Eileen McAuley, has been given Honorary Life Membership by the Committee in recognition of her thirty years sterling service to the Society. The existing Committee was re-elected for another year with Catriona Duncan as the new Chair. Following the AGM, musical entertainment was provided by Ballycastle Comhaltas Youth Group. Finally, the special 50th edition of The Glynn's was launched by Randal McDonnell, the last surviving contributor to the first journal in 1973. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the extra effort made by the Editor, Donnell O'Loan, in producing this expanded volume.

The customary round of lectures took place in St Mary's Parish Centre, Cushendall, commencing on 20 October 2023 with Niall Comer speaking on the Place Names of the Glens of Antrim, followed in November with James McBride giving a talk on the Ballycastle Narrow-Gauge Railway, appropriately held in Ballycastle Parish Centre, a stone's throw from the former railway station. This event was kindly sponsored by Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust. Unfortunately, once again the January talk had to be cancelled due to the inclement weather which has led the Committee to make the decision to no longer schedule a talk in January. Instead, an extra talk will now take place in May and the annual outing will move to June. In February, Gerry Ward did a talk on The Legacy Of Charles Lanyon in The Glens and beyond, whilst in March Bronagh McAtasney from the Digital Film Archive treated us to some short films of Life in the Glens. The final lecture in April was given by Iain Bradley on The Story of Shane O'Neill. We introduced a new stand-alone sound system this year which was very generously donated to the Society by committee member, Eamonn Duffy, who has also stepped down this year. Eamonn has been our dedicated 'sound engineer' at the lectures for many years and was heavily relied upon to operate the Parish sound system. Therefore, we are very grateful to him for our new user-friendly system and he also has been given Honorary Life Membership by the Committee.

Committee meetings were held throughout the year to attend to the business of the Society and any arising matters. In addition, the proposed book to mark the Society's 60th anniversary next year is proceeding as planned. We were delighted to receive a grant towards the production of this book from the Esme Mitchell Trust.

One further exceptional change has been the departure of our long-serving Office Manager, Bernie Delargy, who has been a dedicated, trusted member of the team and we thank her for her excellent service over the past twenty-four years. We were delighted to appoint Christine Melby as the new Office Manager.