

THE METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Trustees' Annual Report for Financial Year ended 31 December 2023

Charity Name: The Methodist Historical Society of Ireland (MHSI)

Charity Number: 103661

Address: Edgehill House, 9 Lennoxvale, Belfast, BT9 5BY

Names of Trustees: Dr Fergus O'Ferrall, Rev. Dr Edmund T.I. Mawhinney; Mr Derek J. Reid; Miss Trudy Reid; Rev. Robin P. Roddie, Mrs Jennifer P. Stutt; Dr Brian S. Turner

Governance of MHSI: The Methodist Historical Society of Ireland is governed by its Constitution formally adopted on 15 October 2010. A sub-committee has been appointed to review the Constitution. A draft revised Constitution will be brought to the 2024 AGM for approval and adoption.

Principal purposes:

The Society's purposes are:

1. To promote the advancement of the education of the public in connection with the history of Methodism.
2. To acquire and preserve books, manuscripts, documents in any medium, and artefacts, and to provide facilities for study and display of same.
3. To promote conferences, public lectures and pilgrimages and lectures given by acknowledged authorities on some aspect of Methodism.
4. To publish a journal of the Society once a year or at other such intervals as determined by the Executive Committee.
5. To raise, invite and receive contributions from any body, person, or persons by way of subscription, donation, grant or otherwise.
6. To maintain a website to promote the interests, activities, and publications of the Society.

All of the Society's purposes are for public benefit.

ACHIEVEMENTS – achievements are listed below for each of the Society's six purposes.

1. Advancement of Education

The Archives continue to welcome academic researchers and those interested in researching their family history. Queries also come in online and are answered by the Archivist and Associate Archivist. The website continued to be active during this year and continues to provide some income through sales and charges for scanned copies of requested material. In particular, there had been a request from a Museum and Historical Society based in Pennsylvania requesting images from Roger Lamb's Commonplace book for a forthcoming exhibition and publication entitled *The Doan Gang – Outlaws of the Revolution*.

Indexing the Dublin-based monthly the *Irish Methodist Church Record* (1893-1929) has now covered the years up to 1903. In addition the transcribing of a three-volume index to early Irish Methodist baptisms from 1815-1858, compiled in 1865 is reaching completion. Indexing of articles which appeared in the *Irish Christian Advocate* on Methodist Circuits has been

uploaded to the in-house data base. A catalogue of early manuscript letters of early Methodist preachers is being uploaded to Library World. A data base of 3-dimensional material is in the process of being created and, when completed, will be uploaded on to Library World and will be accessible via the website.

The digitisation of Methodist periodicals from 1859-2015 is available online. Feedback continues to show that this important project is of great interest to scholars, researchers and those interested in Irish Methodist History across the world.

2. Acquisition and Preservation of Books, Manuscripts, Documents and Artifacts

Material continues to come in from around the Methodist Church in Ireland and it is estimated that more than eighty-five per cent of the Church's records are deposited in the archives. A more unusual acquisition had been an American portable organ which had belonged to Rev. Dwyer Kelly and used while ministering to the troops in the First World War. Personal papers belonging to prominent Methodists have also been deposited.

3. Conferences, Public Lectures and Pilgrimages.

In April 2023 Ian d'Alton gave the Spring Lecture in Dublin entitled *Focus – A Life's Ambition – Risteárd Ó Glaisne's Irish Protestant Journal*. Following the AGM in June 2023, Jane Donovan gave a lecture entitled, *An 1816 Honeymoon in Ireland: Henry Foxall's Connections to Irish Ironworking and Methodism*. This was an online lecture. Kevin Miller

from membership subscriptions, donations from churches and circuits and gave the Annual Lecture in October on *From Place to Place: The Ulster Mission Hall and the Protestant Denominations*. This was in person and online.

The annual Pilgrimage visited the churches of Castledermot, Carlow, Tullow and Clonegal on the Carlow Circuit in May 2023.

4. Publication of the Bulletin

The 2023 issue of the *Bulletin* was published in November and included the transcripts of Nicola Morris's lecture entitled *Looking beyond the Circuit: The Irish Christian Advocate and the question of Ireland after the Second World War*; Ian d'Alton's lecture on Risteárd Ó Glaisne's *Irish Protestant Journal* and Jane Donovan's lecture on Henry Foxall. There were book reviews by Clive D. Field, Richard Vickery, Clive Murray Norris and John R. Tyson.

Raising Financial Contributions.

Income for the Society is largely generated from members' subscriptions, congregational donations, and contributions for family genealogical research. In 2023 the Society's membership remained at 394 including institutional members.

5. Maintaining the Website.

The Society's website continues to be well used with queries regarding research topics and family histories coming from around the world. Society events are also publicised on the website.

PUBLIC BENEFIT:

Beneficiaries of the Society's work include anyone with an interest in Irish Methodist History – members of the public researching family history, scholars, researchers, genealogists, and members of MHSI, both locally and overseas. Those contacting the Society benefit from the expertise of the Archivist and volunteer staff and, under normal circumstances, have access to the huge range of resources managed by the Society. The publication of the *Bulletin* and its placement in the libraries of every university of Ireland, in academic libraries in the US and

Australia and in legal deposit libraries in both UK and Ireland has ensured a wide-reaching readership. The increasing number of visitors to the website have access to a wealth of information which facilitates research both of an academic nature and of local and family history. The digitization of the Methodist periodicals, now accessible online generates considerable interest worldwide. The programme of lectures and the annual pilgrimage foster and develop interest in people and places with significant relevance to Methodism. The continuing acquisition of new materials of special Methodist interest and the careful preservation of the collection held in the archives, ensures the long-term survival of this unique material for use of present and future generations. All of the above help to further understanding, appreciation and knowledge of all aspects of Irish Methodist history and are for public benefit.

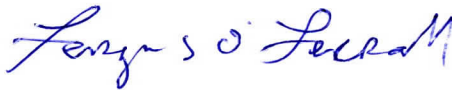
FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Funding for MHSI comes mainly from annual membership subscriptions and donations from Circuits. In addition, there is a small income derived from sales of books, from donations for searches and resultant scanning of materials and from donations from individuals. The main items of expenditure include rent, costs associated with the running of the archives, insurance, printing and stationery and website hosting. At the end of the financial year, income covered expenditure and there was a small reserve. There were no funds which were in deficit.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE:

The Trustees of the Methodist Historical Society, during the year, complied with their duty to have regards to the guidance provided by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Signature of Trustee:



Position: Trustee and President

Date: 4 September 2024

Signature of Trustee:



Position: Trustee and Secretary

Date: 4 September 2024