

Trustees Report (1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024)

Current / Ongoing Projects:

1. The Whitewell - a 20th century community on the slopes of Cave Hill.

August 2023 - we received the first payment (£13,645) of a grant from the Heritage Lottery to start our a project on the Whitewell a unique urban/rural community on the slopes of Cave Hill close to Bellevue zoo. The community was scattered and the houses demolished to make way for the M2 motorway. The people have strong links and love reminiscing about this special place. Interestingly, the Cave Hill was their playground. We were determined to record and preserve their stories.

We started by bringing older people together to reminisce and reflect on their experiences. Much visiting and door to door leafleting and posters were used in the local area.

The project was launched at The local pub 'The Bellevue' and community groups in the area were invited as well as individuals. Mclloy Court, The Belfast Hills Partnership and The Newtownabbey Community Forum at Barron Hall and Whitewell Development Association, and the nearest Churches (Col, R.C) were enthusiastic supporters of the project.



We got press coverage in the North Belfast News and Mr. Mukesh Sharma from the Heritage Lottery Board attended the launch.

August 2023: We appealed at the launch for photos of the area, and heritage stories and research about the laundry and mills. A Whatsapp group was set up to communicate with and between interested parties and volunteers. (50 members).

October 2023: We sent old analogue video taped recordings to Alive Studios in England to be converted to Digital for use in the Whitewell Project.

November 2023: We started researching the history of the Whitewell area.

January 2024 We started filmed interviews with project participants and began location Film shoots on the Cave Hill. Editing also began on the filmed material as well as research for the book about the Whitewell.

2. Pádraic Fiacc, Poet.

January 2024 A grant of £3,000 was awarded to MMH from the Esme Mitchell Foundation to assist with the archival work on the poet's papers and work began with the Pádraic Fiacc Archive.

January 2024 A grant of £3,663 was awarded to MMH by Arts Council NI to curate an exhibition and film about the life of Pádraic Fiacc (in the year he would have been 100). We got agreement from PRONI to exhibit this in their gallery in the coming June.

March 2024 - Fiona Gault a graduate student at Maynooth University volunteered to help with the Fiacc Archive, with advice, guidance and planning for the forthcoming events.

Other Activities/Future Project Plans:

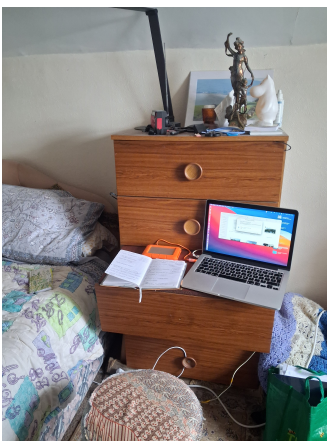
2. Belfast Stories Project

MMH volunteers attended further consultations about the "Belfast Stories" initiative at Belfast City Hall. MMH offered its wealth of material filmed in Belfast and beyond.

3. Advisory Committee formed for the Whitewell Project

March 2024 An Advisory Committee was set up for the Whitewell Project meeting monthly in a local cafe. Members Patrica Doherty, Alan McKinlay and our Treasurer, Elizabeth Bogle.

MMH Management & Governance



MMH has no premises and no staff. This is an advantage. It is run out of our volunteers' houses, cafes, libraries and community venues, even outdoors. We visit people in their homes to interview them if invited. This works well. Talking to people over a cuppa is a great way to network and find out what is really going on in our local areas, and what people really care about. MMH believes that social media has a place but talking to people, recording their stories, preserving

them and presenting them in films and at public screenings and events is our key aim.

The Trustees thank the MMH volunteers for allowing their premises to be used for meetings, the use of their own computer equipment, cameras and cars when needed to carry out events and activities.

The feedback from those MMH engages with - both individuals and organisations - is overwhelmingly positive. We could not produce the high-quality outputs (books, films, exhibitions and events) without the backing of people we encounter and engage with. We work ethically and with a healthy regard to issues of consent, safeguarding and accountability.

MMH Resources

The issue of storage drives & capacity for filmed material continues to be a priority and a challenge. 4K film is very 'memory-hungry'. We continue to add to secure storage drives and backups for our original SD cards, Tapes and other material.

Social media

Vimeo Pro account allows 20GB of film to be uploaded per week. We continue to add material to the vimeo site.

The website continues to be a challenge, and we have relied more on Whatsapp and Facebook to communicate, as well as email and leafleting campaigns. This ensures that people excluded from the digital age can still be active participants and volunteers in our projects.

Thanks

MMH currently has 8 core volunteers who consistently help with MMH projects and events, and 10 more who help with projects on an occasional basis. They are all over the north of Ireland and have been the driving force in identifying projects and facilitating and liaising with participants.

R.I.P Marie Griffin

1 May 2023 MMH Chairperson Marie Griffin sadly passed away. She is a great loss to us. Marie was involved with MMH since the 2010 and was delighted to be elected to serve as Chairperson.

Her love of history and heritage and especially her local knowledge touched those who knew her well.