

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: NI661299 (Northern Ireland)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 108158

Report of the Trustees and
Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2022
for
Portstewart Convention

McCleary & Company Ltd
Chartered Accountants
Garvey Studios
14 Longstone Street
Lisburn
Co. Antrim
BT28 1TP

Portstewart Convention

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Portstewart Convention

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2022. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Introduction

The annual Convention in Portstewart has taken place each year from its inception in 1914 until the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of the restrictions introduced by the Government to control the spread of the virus there was no Convention on site in 2020 and 2021. The Directors were very pleased that it was possible to arrange an annual Convention again in July 2022.

Historically Portstewart Convention has been organised through a Trust but, in 2019, it was incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 as a private company, limited by guarantee with its registered office in Northern Ireland. In June 2021 the new company was registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. On 1 January 2022 all the assets and business of the Trust were transferred to the new Company and, therefore, this is the first Annual Report to be submitted to the Charity Commission by the Company.

The purpose of the Company, as set out in its registration with the Charity Commission, is identical to that in the registration of the Trust. So far as attendees are concerned there should not be any noticeable change to the ethos and the practical arrangements for the Convention.

Objectives and aims

In its application for registration with the Charity Commission the Company set out three main "tactical plans and arrangements" which would be followed in order to achieve the Convention's purpose.

The first of these plans is the effective marketing of the Convention. In 2022 this presented a greater challenge than usual because there had not been a Convention gathering on site in the previous two years and so there was a break in continuity. Some professional advice and assistance was engaged and a range of media was used including the Convention's website and social media. While there is increasing use of digital resources the composition of Convention audiences requires the continued use of some more traditional methods. The resulting attendance numbers did not reach pre-Covid levels but were encouraging in the circumstances with up to 800 people present on some evenings.

The second part of the plan - a suitable programme - followed a similar pattern to previous years and continued to prove its effectiveness particularly in the consistency of attendance numbers throughout the week with people keen to hear the full sequence of teaching. Prayer and counselling facilities were used by people wishing to consider the personal implications of the teaching.

The bookshop providing literature which complemented the teaching programme and a missionary exhibition showing opportunities worldwide for practical Christian service both generated a good level of interest. Scripture Union returned with its well-structured programme for children and young people. The coffee shop on the site was well used and gave attendees the opportunity for social interaction when they could discuss the content of the main talks, share life experiences, encourage one another and make new friends.

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The third aspect of the plan is the maintenance of the marquees, the property and the site to facilitate the annual gathering. The Directors are especially grateful to Cunningham Covers Ltd from Maghera who maintain, erect and dismantle the marquees with professional expertise. Routine site maintenance work continued.

Ground belonging to the Convention and adjoining the site was leased to Causeway Coast and Glens Council and its predecessor organisations for 50 years and was made available for public car parking except for the week of the annual Convention. The Council decided not to renew this lease when it expired on 29 December 2021. The Directors were pleased to reach an agreement with Car Park Services Ltd for the operation of the car park on a "pay and display" basis. The availability of this car parking area is critical to the management of attendance at the annual Convention and the income generated throughout the year makes an important contribution to Convention running costs.

The Directors recognise that there is no practical means to measure the full outcome of the week of Convention. This can only be seen in the lives of people returning to their own homes and districts to live in a manner which, in the words of the Convention's purpose, is God-honouring, helpful to and considerate of others. The Directors give thanks to God for the evidence of the Spirit influencing and changing lives during the 2022 Convention.

FINANCIAL REVIEW
Financial Review

As shown more fully in the attached accounts the Convention's income from all sources in 2022 was £647,898. This included assets donated by the unincorporated charity of £597,354, leaving £50,544 from the charity's normal activities. Apart from £4,717 received as donations to the Missionary Fund this income was applied to the running costs of the 2022 Convention, the maintenance and improvement of the site and to maintaining a reserve as a prudent provision towards future costs. The Missionary Fund income was distributed in its entirety to the designated projects.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT
Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

The Company did not employ any staff during the year. It engaged around 50 volunteers in the organisation of the Annual Convention.

The Directors wish to record their appreciation of the long service given to the Convention by Mr Oswald Mitchell, following his retirement as a Director on 28 September 2022. After a number of years on Committee he was made a Trustee in May 1987 and became a founding Director of the new Company on its incorporation in June 2017. He served as Convention Treasurer for a number of years. From a first attendance at the 1931 Convention his has been a lifetime of commitment to the Convention bringing his greatly valued wisdom drawn from his personal and professional life including that gained through a period serving as a Missionary Doctor in Nigeria.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number
NI661299 (Northern Ireland)

Portstewart Convention
Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 December 2022

Registered Charity number
108158

Registered office
42 Rossburn Manor
Kells
Ballymena
Co. Antrim
BT42 3RB

Trustees
Rev Joseph Fell: Minister of Religion
Rev Johnston Rea Lambe: Minister of Religion
Rev Darren Basil McCorriston: Minister of Religion
Mr James Lawson McDonald: Retired Civil Servant
Dr Oswald H A Mitchell: Retired Surgeon (retired 28.9.22)

Company Secretary
Mr David Preston

Independent Examiner
John McCleary FCA
McCleary & Company Ltd
Chartered Accountants
Garvey Studios
14 Longstone Street
Lisburn
Co. Antrim
BT28 1TP

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 23 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Mr James Lawson McDonald - Trustee