

NEW BUILDINGS AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT (NDAHS)

APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2024

ANNUAL REPORT – JANUARY 2024

Membership

Membership is steady between 15 and 20 members. Some non-members attend meeting on an ad hoc basis. They are made very welcome, but we do try to encourage membership. The fee remains at £10 per year.

Officers

Officers remain the same people at the time of application for Charity status. Some roles have been swapped since the recent AGM. This is welcomed in our group as it allows officers to experience differing roles and requirements.

Bridgeen Rutherford – Chairman; Joe McCorkell Vice Chairman; Eleanor McDaid Secretary; Philip McDaid Treasurer; Niall Johnston and George Rutherford look after catering and setting up the venue on lecture nights.

Covid response

The Society did not meet during Covid due the regulations of the period.

NDAHS Activites - 21st Birthday year

The Society was established in January 2002, two years after first meeting to discuss producing a book on the history of the village and surrounding area. We have since published two books on local history, “The Tail of the Fox” and “Rossnagalliagh – a Country School”. The Society has also obtained funding and carried out two archaeological digs, one for a Rath and the second for a Souterrain. We are now 21 years in operation apart from the Lockdown period.

The Society attracts members from all sections of the local community, irrespective of religion or background. We endeavour, through talks and displays about the history of our area, to bring a sense of cultural and historical awareness to the local community. As well as aiming at adults, we also make direct contact with the local schools to develop their sense of belonging and pride in their area.

We are working with New Buildings Primary School and the War Museum in Belfast on WW 11. I, as Chair, have also been involved in a NI wide book recording people’s memories and stories associated with WW 11,

“We just got on with it!” by Doreen McBride from Banbridge Historical Society. This was compiled during Covid.

We also hold membership of Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action. The Society is affiliated to the Federation of Ulster Local Studies and the Federation of Local History Societies in the South of Ireland. We are pleased to liaise with other like-minded fellow member groups with a common interest in the study of local history. We join up with other Societies on outings of historical significance and network with other local, regional, and all-Ireland groups to share experiences.

At our AGM in October 2023, Mr George McLaughlin, was nominated as President of the Society. He very gratefully accepted the nomination. The Society is delighted and indebted to him for his help and advice over the 21 years the Society has been in operation.

I recently was involved in a project called “Mapping Monuments” with Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands and Queens University Belfast. The project traced the area along the line which was used for the original Ordnance Survey in 1830s. My role, as a volunteer, was looking at the social history of the period. This was an extremely interesting project. I was nominated to prepare and present my paper at our conference in November. This was well attended on the day. There is a travelling project which will be moved around Northern Ireland over the next few months.

The following is the programme for the period November 2022 to May 2024. These lectures were well attended by the membership and the speakers, in the main, gave freely of their time and knowledge.

We applied for funding for a History Project to involve the two local primary schools on the subject of WW1 and WW2. We unfortunately were turned down on this occasion. We have not received funding from Derry City and Strabane District Council for at least a 10-year period. Membership fees support the small fees paid to speakers. We are indebted to the speakers who do not charge our group and to attract speakers from a wider area, we would have to pay an honorarium and travel expenses. This is not possible in the current climate.

PROGRAMME FOR THE PERIOD NOVEMBER 2022 to MAY 2024

November 2022	AGM – First one post-covid in new venue of New Buildings Cricket Club.
January 2023	Cancelled due to weather

15 February 2023	David Douglas	Derrie Danders – LocalTour Guide
15 March 2023	Amanda Buchanan and Pat McNulty	Anyone keen to research your own Family Tree – a how to guide to assist you in the process.
19 April 2023	William Lynn	History of Foyle College.
24 May 2023	Roger Warmington	“From a tree to a forest” (Exploits of an RAF Navigator during WW11).
10 June 2023 OUTING	Morning visit to Foyle College Archives, lunch followed by a walking tour with Derrie Danders.	
4 October 2023	AGM – Followed by talk by George McLaughlin on Prehen House and the Archaeological Dig carried out in 2013.	
13 November 2023	Robert Guthrie	Sinking of the Hilding
13 December 2023	Dr Keith Munro	Through the eyes of Margaret Cousins
January 2024	No Meeting due to bad weather	
21 February 2024	Bart O'Donnell	Bart O'Donnell's talk. “Boomhall – the surprising history”.
20 March 2024	Caroline Carr	‘Untold’ – Donegal Women in the Revolutionary Period.

11 April 2024	John Thompson	The History of Magee University'
15 May 2024	Norman Thorpe	The RAF in Ballykelly and surrounding airfields
8 June 2024 – Outing to St Augustine's Church, lunch at the Hidden Cafe in town and a tour of		

29 January 2025 Bridgeen Rutherford, Chairman NDAHS