



Newsletter

ISSUE NUMBER 1

JUNE 2018

UK TRIP – EAST MIDLANDS – MON 22 – FRI. 27TH
APRIL 2018

A coach load of fiftytwo members, representing twenty four historical societies from twenty one counties and lead by our great friend and guide, Ian Jelf, made the trip to Nottingham for our visit to the East Midlands. It was a wonderful experience which took us to the cities of Nottingham, Leicester and Lincoln and many iconic places of interest along the way. On Tuesday we started with a walking tour of Nottingham followed by a visit to the impressive Chatsworth House and finished the day with a scenic coach tour around part of the beautiful Peak District. Next day we travelled to Leicester City to follow the story of Richard III and the discovery of his remains in the car park. It was a unique experience to visit the Richard III centre and then see his last resting place in nearby Leicester Cathedral. Next we made a visit to Burghley House which was one of the highlights of our trip and one of the most beautiful and interesting stately houses in all of England. No visit to Nottingham would be complete without a visit to Sherwood Forest and we spent some time having a lovely walk in the forest to see the “Great Oak” associated with the legend of Robin Hood. The afternoon saw us visit Lincoln City with its magnificent Cathedral and enjoyed some free time walking around its many quaint and unique streets. This was another memorable trip to the Heart of England.

FEDERATION AGM – SLIGO – FRI. 18TH – SUN. 20TH
MAY 2018

The AGM was a great success with fifty eight delegates registering for the weekend activities. The AGM was hosted by the Sligo Field Club who did an excellent job in organising the weekend and looking after us. In the absence of Michael Gaynor, who had stepped down as Chairman, the AGM was ably chaired by Vice Chair, Martina Griffin and the business of the day was carried out in a most workmanlike way. The Committee for the incoming year was elected with Padraig Laffan being elected as the new Chairperson. A special word of welcome was extended to our friends from the FULS who attended the AGM as delegates. It was a very busy and productive weekend which included field trips to Carrowmore Neolithic Tombs; Lissadell House, childhood home of Constance Markievicz; a guided tour of Sligo Town and a most interesting and informative visit to Sligo Gaol. During the evenings, Sligo Field Club, entertained the visitors with several excellent after-dinner talks. Special thanks to FLHS

committee member, Dick Ryan, for all his work in organising the event.

SPRING SEMINAR — SATURDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY,
2018 — ATHLONE

Our regional Spring Seminar, “Local History is your History” was held in the Hodson Bay Hotel near Athlone and was very well attended by delegates from around the country. Ian Kenneally, President of the Old Athlone Society, welcomed everyone and officially opened the seminar. Several speakers delivered talks on a variety of subjects all centred on the subject of local history and communities. Larry Breen talked about the History Federation’s role in promoting local history. Dr. Herman Murtagh presented the subject of “Local History and Me”; Anton Lennon from Drum Heritage Group about how he developed an interest in local history and finally Jim Ganly, Co. Roscommon Historical & Archaeological Society, made a presentation on “Graveyard Conservation”. Special thanks to Martina Griffin, Eamon Leonard and Jim Dockery for organising the event.

FUTURE EVENTS:

UK TRIP 2019. We are currently looking at next year’s trip and are considering the following possible locations. Scotland, London or Northumbria. Further details to follow.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR). We have already circulated our members with some guidelines on the new regulations and plan to follow this up with a seminar on the subject. Further details to follow.

NEW MEMBERS: We would like to welcome the following who have recently joined the Federation and look forward to working with them.

Coolock, Artane & District Historical Society; Banbridge Historical Society; Emly Historical Society; Publishing Sligo Past; Remembering Edward Bransfield, and Aidan Dockery (Individual)

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2018:

There are still some society 2018 membership renewal subscriptions outstanding. We would appreciate it if these could be returned at your earliest convenience.

2018 FEDERATION JOURNAL:

We are requesting articles for this year’s journal and would welcome material. Guidelines are 1000–4000 in MS Word format and accompanied by pictures where possible in uncompressed jpeg format. We are also looking for Society News — This should be a short article with picture(s) where appropriate. Submissions should be sent to Larry Breen at larrybreen8@outlook.com, Tel. 045 897445 or mobile 087 984 1551.

The Federation would like to wish you all a Happy Summer Holiday.

LARRY BREEN, PRO

FRANK MURRAY, RIP.



Many will have seen the news reports of the sudden and unexpected death on the Saturday of Easter weekend of Mr. Frank Murray, RIP. There have been many commendations from the Taoiseach, the President and other senior politicians.

Frank was Secretary to the government through some exciting times including, Charlie Haughey's tenure and quite a few other Taoisigh and the peace process. On retirement he took up other posts. The most significant being with Sir Ken Bloomfield on the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains. He one of two international inspectors tasked with finding the bodies of people 'disappeared' during the Northern troubles. Frank was greatly respected internationally and even by the hard line protagonists and most importantly by the families of the missing, in whom he inspired confidence that he was one who would never give up the search. He met the families. He met the IRA men and the other hard men and many others with the guarantee that what he learned would not leak out to any other body whether government, press, security or other shady group or individual. He and his colleagues in the ILCVR steadily worked through the list of the disappeared, finding remains even as far away as France and bringing some measure of comfort and closure to many families. Now only three remain to be found.

The Federation of Local History Societies and The Federation for Ulster Studies were beneficiaries of Frank's generous support and influence when we organised our first 'Our Own Place' series of events. The FULS came to Dublin with a coach full of local

history members, very many of whom had never been to Dublin and who needed reassurance that they would be well received and safe in Dublin. Indeed, did so many of our group on the visit in the other direction. I was at that time the chairman of the FLHS and Frank was one of our members in Foxrock. He volunteered to help in any he could. We wanted to make a really big impression on our guests and to show the best possible Dublin welcome. He arranged for the whole group to visit the then almost sacrosanct very beautiful Iveagh House, HQ of the Dept. of Foreign Affairs. When this large group arrived it was to find a wine and refreshments reception laid on and we noted the welcome and the deference of the Civil Service staff given to Frank who was then just retired from Secretary to the Government. We had a similar experience at Dublin Castle State Apartments.

Over the years Frank provided much similar help and presented a lecture to our society on the work of the ILCVR which was the same lecture he had presented to a United Nations body and other international groups. He was a modest and self-effacing man and when a few of us relaxed together he had some great stories from his days in the corridors of power. He was a good friend and a great Leitrim and Irish man and it can truly be said that in a long and distinguished Civil Service career he did this state some great service.



ΔΡ ΘΗΣ ΟΕ ΣΟ ΡΑΙΒΗ Δ ΔΝΑΜ ΘΗΛΙΣ

PÁDRAIG LAFFAN