

FEDERATION OF LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES

ROSE HOTEL TRALEE

WEEKEND 30TH SEPT – 2ND OCT 2022

The 2022 Federation AGM was held in Tralee, Co Kerry, with delegates staying in the lovely Rose Hotel in the town. The event was very well attended with more than sixty delegates staying in the Rose Hotel over the weekend. We had representatives of sixteen counties from all around the island including Armagh, Antrim, Down, Derry, Louth, Kildare, Wicklow, Kerry, Carlow, Westmeath, Roscommon, Waterford, Tipperary, Meath, Dublin and Cork. Members from twenty societies were present and included Clane, Foxrock, Rathmichael, Raheny, Waterford, Tipperary, Banbridge, Navan, Cork, Cloyne, Ashbourne, Moate, Dromore, Carlow, Ardfer, Killorglin, Newbridge, West Belfast, Industrial Heritage Dublin and Athy.

We were delighted to welcome our great friends and colleagues from the Federation for Ulster Local Studies who attended; Joe McCoy, Chairman, FULS; Bridie Bradley, Treasurer, FULS; Jimmy/Jackie Conway Lurgan, Doreen/George McBride, Pat Hanna, Myrtle Hanna and Esther Ervin all from Banbridge.

The AGM was hosted by the Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society who did a marvellous job in organising a very impressive programme of activities over the whole weekend. Sincere thanks to the Kerry society and in particular to their President, Jimmy Deenihan, for all the help, support and hospitality we received.

We were touched by the warmth of the welcome and the hospitality that we were afforded by everyone we met. Tralee and its people were a great advertisement for the town and the rest of the County.

WEEKEND PROGRAMME

On Friday evening we were met in the Rose Hotel by Jimmy Deenihan on behalf of the Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society and officially welcomed to Tralee by Mikey Sheehy, Mayor of Tralee. He wished us well with our AGM and hoped we had an enjoyable weekend in the Kingdom. He said it was an honour to play host to such an important organisation such as the Federation. After dinner we were treated to a most interesting talk by Claudia Kolher, from the County Kerry Museum, on the History & Archaeology of the County.

The business of the AGM was held in the conference room of the hotel on the Saturday morning. The event was officially opened by Moira Murrell, CEO, Kerry County Council, who welcomed the Federation to Tralee. Moira complimented the Federation on the work it is doing in promoting the study of local history throughout the Country and the contribution this makes in identifying our place and sense of identity in the community.

The business of the AGM went very well with a large audience in attendance and after all the reports were delivered the incoming committee was elected. Padraig Laffan was particularly thanked for his tenure as Chairman during the difficult times of Covid. Dick Ryan and Mary Kenahan stepped down from the committee and were thanked for the great contribution they had made over the years. Mairead Byrne was elected as Chairperson, Padraig Laffan as Vice Chairman and Bernadette Doyle as Treasurer. All the current remaining committee were elected together with new member, Padraig O Concubhair,

Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society. The “Society Spake” went smoothly thanks to Padraig’s organisation and control, and it offered, as in previous years, the opportunity for societies to share with each other all the good work they are all doing.

After having lunch we were treated to a memorable walking tour of Tralee by Maurice O’Keeffe, Irish Life & Lore, an eminent local historian. Among the places of interest that we visited were the site of The Dominican Priory of the Holy Cross, The Dominican Church 1861, Day Place, The Catholic Chapel - Chapel Lane, The Infirmary, the birthplace of Monsignor Hugh O’Flaherty, Milk Market Lane, The Island of Geese and Rackett Lane, and the Old Tralee Barracks. St John the Evangelist was built as a parish church in the 13th Century. Adjacent was the Hospital of the Knights of Jerusalem. In this building, on display when we visited, was the Denny Bible, dating back to the 1620s, and the Denny Estate Maps of the town of Tralee 1877. The Courthouse, built in 1835 at Nelson Street and designed by architect William Morrison is an excellent example of Gothic Revival architecture. The cannon guns that flank the courthouse, were captured in the Crimea in 1855. The plinths are engraved with 124 names of soldiers lost, representing 28 regiments. Our walk ended with a visit to the Presentation Convent which was built in the late 19th Century. We visited the nuns’ chapel where the interior was worked on by an Italian craftsman who designed and laid the mosaic flooring, oak seating and a marble sculpture of the Pieta. The tour concluded with a visit to the nuns’ garden.

On that Saturday evening we all gathered for dinner in the hotel after which we were treated to an exceptional talk by Dr Richard McElligott entitled the “Civil War in Kerry”, its causes and consequences. It proved to be a most interesting and enthralling lecture.

On Sunday morning we made a visit to the Kerry County Museum located in the Ashe Memorial Building and accompanied by Claudia Kolher, Education Officer, KCC, experienced a wonderful guided tour of the many exhibitions on view.

And so came to an end a wonderful and memorable weekend in Tralee. As I have said before, we were touched by the warm welcome and hospitality we were afforded by everyone we met during our visit.

