

Irish Labour History Society

Annual Report 2020

Presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Irish Labour History Society
on Saturday 22nd May 2021

OBITUARIES

The following individuals associated with the Society or our activities passed away since the last Annual General Meeting of the Society.

- Anthony Behan
- Mel Corry

We regret their passing and extend our sympathy to their families & friends. Our thoughts are also with all who were bereaved over the past twelve months.

HONORARY PRESIDENTS

- Catriona Crowe
- Mary Clancy
- Fergus A. D'Arcy
- Barry Desmond
- Francis Devine
- Ken Hannigan
- Theresa Moriarty
- Emmet O'Connor
- Gréagóir O'Dúill

TRUSTEES

- Patrick Bolger
- Patricia King
- Ruairí Quinn

IRISH LABOUR HISTORY SOCIETY OUTGOING COMMITTEE

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| • President | Shay Cody |
| • Vice President | Fionnuala Richardson |
| • Secretary | Kevin Murphy |
| • Treasurer | Ed Penrose |
| • Assistant Secretary | Eddie Soye |
| • Assistant Treasurer | Seamus Moriarty |

Committee Members: Pat Carroll, Donal Denham, John Feely, Rayner Lysaght, Bill McCamley, Mícheál Mac Donncha, Mary Muldowney, Yvonne O'Callaghan & Betty Tyrell-Collard.

Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 5th September 2020 (Online via Webex)

The AGM was re-scheduled from Spring 2020. Motions were passed in relation to membership fees, the Charities Regulator and the awarding of the John Swift Award. Shay Cody was elected as President, with Donal Denham and Bill McCamley elected onto the committee. Draft minutes have been circulated to members.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Treasurer of the Society, Ed Penrose, emailed the Audited accounts to members with all the paper items for the AGM. They will also be put on our website for a short time, if a member requires a printed version they should contact the Secretary at secretary@irishlabourhistorysociety.com.

COMMITTEE

Meetings: The Committee met virtually since the previous AGM last September to discuss events programme and to discuss and make decisions on various projects and activities.

Saothar Editors: Dr Mary McAuliffe & Dr Peter Rigney (Saothar 46)

Charities Regulatory Authority Returns: The Society continues to make annual returns to the Charities Regulatory Authority as required. Members of the committee have attended webinar training sessions organised by the authority also.

MEMBERSHIP

Individual Membership

Members of the Society are requested to inform the Society if their contact details (postal or email address) change. Thank you to those members who provided us with their updated details.

The option of renewing Society membership through the link on the Society website www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com is increasing in popularity, particularly since the pandemic arrived.

Corporate Affiliations

Corporate membership is another crucial source of support to the various activities of the Society. The Society is very grateful for all of the invaluable assistance – financial and otherwise – offered by our corporate supporters. The Society would not survive but for the support of all our individual and corporate members.

ARCHIVE & LIBRARY

Staffing & Premises

The premises was closed as per public health guidelines in place at various stages throughout the year. Researchers were accommodated when restrictions were lifted in late 2020. Two members of staff were working behind the scenes when the guidelines permitted this. All necessary health and safety precautions in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic were adhered to. An application for funding for equipment under the community heritage grants scheme was made to the Heritage Council earlier this year.

The Officers and committee members wish to thank them for all of their work for the Society. Special thanks must also be given to Ed Penrose for all of his voluntary work as Premises Manager on the collections. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Office of Public Works and their staff for their continued support.

Digitisation Project: The Society is working in conjunction with Dublin City Libraries in relation to potential digitisation of material from the ILHS collections. The objective is to preserve items in our collections and to make them freely available online also. Suitable items from the collections have been identified already.

Deposits & Donations of Archival Material and Publications to the Society:

The Society continues to seek and accept records relating to the history of Irish workers and their organisations. Among the donations in the past year was: a large donation of material from the family of the late Dónal Foley (Irish Times). Papers relating to Alfie Watters of the Automobile Association. Material from Seamus Pattison (former Carlow-Kilkenny T.D.). Miscellaneous deposits from members and supporters of the Society.

Website: Further content has been added to our website www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com , with an upgrade of the site currently in development. Upcoming labour history events are added to the news section of the website where possible. An increasing number of members join/renew their membership of the Society directly through the website www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com also. The Society has a Facebook page which also share details of upcoming ILHS and labour history events, while @Saothar1 is the Twitter account for the journal.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

A number of talks were organised by the Society in the final quarter of 2020 and again in the Spring. These took place through Zoom and were recorded also. The Society would like to thank Mary Muldowney for administering these Zoom meetings.

All of these Zoom events attracted a large audience (including many who were not members of the Society or those from outside Dublin region) and were well received.

A YouTube Channel was created and these talks have been published. See [Irish Labour History Society - YouTube](#)

The talks held in October and November 2020 were: Dr Peter Rigney on the 1920 Munitions Dispute, Dr Margaret Ward spoke on Constance Markievicz as Minister for Labour while Francis Devine presented an online lecture on the motor permits strike of 1920.

Five further Zoom talks were held on Saturday afternoons in February and March 2021. Dr Christopher O'Loughlin spoke on the Long Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland, Dr Cormac Moore on the impact of partition, Dr Mary McAuliffe on Margaret Skinnider, Dr Mary Muldowney on Irish women telephonists and the struggle for gender equality in the 1970s, with the concluding event taking place with Dr Mike Meham illustrated talk on Keir Hardie and his relationship with Ireland. A further series of talks are planned for the Autumn.

PUBLICATIONS & PUBLICITY

Saothar

Saothar 45 was distributed to paid up members of the Society from May 2020. Our thanks to Dr Mary McAuliffe and Dr Leeann Lane for their work on the issue.

Dr Leeann Lane stepped down as co-editor of Saothar 46 in late 2020 and Dr Peter Rigney agreed to assist with the editorial process. This volume will be distributed to paid-up members of the Society shortly.

It is possible to order back copies of Saothar still in stock through the ILHS website.

Other Publications

The latest volume in the Studies in Irish Labour History Series (SILHS) was published during the year. *“To Make A Universe of Love, Not A Universe of Hate”*: *Leicestershire Labour and the Dublin Lock Out 1913-14* (by Francis Devine and Mike Shuker). Further SILH publications are being planned.

Several members and contributors to the work of the Society also authored and contributed to various history books in the period since the previous AGM in September. These include *Brendan Scott: The Struggle For A Socialist & Secular Ireland* by John P. Swift (Umiskin Press), *In Spanish Trenches: The Irish Who Fought For Republican Spain* by Barry McLoughlin & Emmet O'Connor (UCD Press), *How Railwaymen and Dockers defied An Empire: The Irish Munitions Embargo of 1920* by Peter Rigney (Umiskin Press).

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ILHS Member Dr Mike Mecham continues to be an Executive Committee member of the Society for the Study of Labour History. Member Stephen Clancy is our contact person for the Scottish Labour History Society. The Society continues its affiliation to the two main international bodies – IALHI (International Association of Labour History Institutions) and Vienna based ITH (International Conference of Labour & Social Historians).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A large number of individuals and organisations have continued to support the Society over the past twelve months. These include all of our individual and corporate members, editors and contributors to Saothar, the staff based in Beggars Bush, the members of the voluntary committee, the Office of Public Works, the Department of Arts and the volunteer members of the Committee. The Officers are very grateful for all of their support.

CORPORATE MEMBERS

AHCPS – ASTI – BATU – Connect – CWU – ESU – FSU – FORSA – Guinness Staff Ass. – ICTU – IFUT
INMO – INTO – Mandate – NUJ – SIPTU – TUI – Unison – UNITE

Trade Councils; Bray – Clonmel – Dublin – Fermanagh – Limerick – Wexford.