

*An Cumann  
Staire Lucht  
Saothar  
na hÉireann*



**Irish  
Labour  
History  
Society**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE IRISH LABOUR HISTORY SOCIETY  
HELD IN THE FÓRSA OFFICE, ROXBOROUGH ROAD, LIMERICK  
SATURDAY 13TH APRIL 2019**

***Attendance:***

Pat Bolger, Liam Cahill, Charles Callan, Pat Carroll, Marian Cody, Michael Cowap, Francis Devine, Michael Dowling, John Feely, Noirin Greene, John Kane, Stephen Lyons, Rayner Lysaght, Jack McGinley, Ray McLaughlin, Mike McNamara, Kieran McNulty, Martin Maguire, Michael Mecham, Seamus Moriarty, Theresa Moriarty, Kevin Murphy, Yvonne O'Callaghan, Emmet O'Connor, Cecily O'Donovan, Flor O'Mahony, Manus O'Riordan, Jan O'Sullivan, Jim Quinn, Fionnuala Richardson, John Ryan, Eddie Soye, John Swift, Vincent Walsh, Pdraig Yeates.

***Apologies:***

Brendan Byrne, Joan Carmichael, Paul Doran, Lynda Earnest-Walker, Niall Greene, Andy Irvine, Roy Johnston, Seán McCarthy, Patrick McCarthy, Helen McGinley, Tony McMullan, Martin Maguire, Brendan O'Callaghan, Ed Penrose, Paul Sweeney.

***1. President's Address:***

The President of the Society, Jack McGinley, opened proceedings by acknowledging the assistance and work of Mike McNamara, Limerick Trades Council and Fórsa in hosting the AGM in Limerick. He informed all members present that there was a copy of Saothar 44 available for them to collect. Jack informed those present that the number of copies printed had been reduced in order to reduce costs (to 500 copies). He noted that there had been unhappiness amongst some members about the editing of submissions (without their consent) and also noted the challenge for the co-editors and the Committee in deciding who merits inclusion in obituaries. The President stated that the appointment of co-editors was within the remit of the committee and that the best working model has often been three working co-editors (two senior, one junior) with a mixture of academic and non-academic co-editors ideally. He concluded that the Society has to be thankful for the work of all the co-editors. Jack also noted that there were issues for the incoming committee, including the appointment of a business editor, general editor and seeking sponsorship for publications related to the 2020 Conference.

Moving on to the ILHS Premises in Beggars Bush in Dublin, the President informed the meeting that the previous twelve months had been worrying and onerous for the Society, with the possibility of the premises in Beggars Bush having to be vacated for Office of Public Works (OPW) construction works a real possibility. There had been multiple site visits by OPW representatives, all facilitated by the ILHS. He added that at this time, it looks unlikely that the ILHS Premises in Beggars Bush will be included in the proposed works area. Notwithstanding these developments, the President stated that the negotiation of a new lease has to be copper-fastened and will be an issue the Officers will be keeping a close eye on. Members will be kept informed of any significant developments.

Jack then summarised the principal activities of the Society and the Committee over the past year, including events held over the past twelve months. He paid tribute to the Officers, Trustees and Committee members for their work on behalf of the Society. The President also thanked the two current co-editors of Saothar, Martin Maguire and Mary McAuliffe for their work on behalf of the Society. Moving on to events, Jack highlighted a joint international conference that the ILHS will be co-organising in Dublin with the Long Room Hub and other partners in September 2020. He noted that a Call for Papers will be issued in the coming months, while it is planned to include the Constance Markievicz Memorial Lecture in the programme. The President also noted that the ILHS website needs to be updated and that there needed to be a recruitment drive in membership as there had been a drift in recent years.

He concluded his formal address by expressing delight that ICTU General Secretary Patricia King had recently taken on the role of joint trustee, with Pat Bolger and Ruairi Quinn (David Begg had stepped down after many years service). He thanked the many individuals and organisations that help progress the work of the Society including all members of the Society and various organisations who help finance Saothar and other ILHS publications. He noted that the Society would not exist but for the ordinary and corporate members subscriptions every year.

## **2. Minutes of AGM of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

The draft minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society were available at the meeting and circulated to members. The minutes as presented were approved by the meeting.

## **3. Annual Report**

The Secretary of the Society, Kevin Murphy, went through the annual report of the Society, highlighting the activities of the Society and the Committee over the previous twelve months. A number of comments were made by members present on the activities of the Society, following the President's address. Charlie Callan noted that it had been the tradition of the Society up to ten years ago that a member of the labour movement should also be a co-editor and suggested we should return to that to ensure that the journal did not become a too academic publication. Pádraig Yeates concurred with this sentiment. Kieran McNulty also noted that an article he had submitted to the journal had not been included, which was a surprise to him. These comments were noted. The Annual Report as presented was agreed, following a proposal from John Kane which was seconded by Pádraig Yeates.

## **4. Financial Report**

The Treasurer Ed Penrose had sent his apologies, with a recent family bereavement noted. The Assistant Treasurer Seamus Moriarty went through the report in his absence, highlighting the headline figures. Seamus also informed those present that Ed and Pádraig (staff member in Beggars Bush) deserve particular credit for ensuring that the current issue of Saothar was ready for the meeting as an error was spotted at a very late stage and rectified at very short notice. A word of thanks to Ed for all of his work over the past twelve months was passed by the meeting, proposed by Seamus Moriarty and seconded by Francis Devine. The financial report as presented was agreed by the meeting, following a proposal by Mick Dowling, seconded by Rayner Lysaght.

## **5. Elections**

A list of nominees for Officers and Committee members for the coming year were circulated to members present. There was one nominee for each position, with the meeting agreeing to all nominations submitted. The need for new recruits to the committee was also noted.

## **6. Motion**

There was one motion before the meeting, from Honorary President Francis Devine. It asked that the Society consider introducing a volunteers programme with a training model and targets. Francis outlined the background to the motion, explaining that he as trustee of the Working Class History Museum until recently he had seen the opportunities of such a programme, including the opportunity to catalogue and digitise items in our collections. This motion was seconded by Nóirín Greene and was agreed by the meeting, with Charlie Callan opposing the motion. It was agreed, following a suggestion from Francis, that the incoming committee should discuss this with Ed Penrose.

## **7. Amendments to the ILHS Constitution**

A proposal to amend the Society's Constitution was put before the meeting. A draft document – highlighting the proposed changes – had been circulated to members and was also available at the AGM. The proposal was proposed by ILHS Trustee Pat Bolger and seconded by the Secretary Kevin Murphy. Pat went through the document, explaining the proposed amendments and deletions. He added that the changes were primarily to ensure that the ILHS Constitution was in line with the governance of the Charities Regulatory Authority (Revenue was referred to in the previous document), while a couple of minor changes were being suggested to ensure that the language of the Constitution was up to date and removing obsolete clauses that no longer apply. The amended Constitution as presented was agreed by the meeting.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Pádraig Yeates informed everyone present that a major conference on the role of the labour movement in the War of Independence period was planned for the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> November. There would be a call for papers and he asked us to circulate details. There would be satellite events elsewhere also.

Jan O'Sullivan also addressed the meeting, welcoming everyone to Limerick and expressing her pleasure, as a member of the Society, that the AGM was taking place in Limerick this year. Mike McNamara from the Limerick Trades Council and one of the chief organisers of the Limerick Soviet centenary programme, also thanked everyone for coming to Limerick and expressed the hope that we can participate in other events into the future.

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The AGM was immediately followed by a talk by ILHS member Liam Cahill *The Limerick Soviet: Remembered And Re-Evaluated*. It included the presentation of an historical item – relevant to the Limerick Soviet that originated from Jim Kemmy - from ILHS Honorary President Barry Desmond to Limerick City Museum (presented in Barry's absence by ILHS Trustee Pat Bolger to Mike McNamara of Limerick Trades Council).