

# Irish Labour History Society Annual Report 2019

## Presented to the Re-Scheduled Annual General Meeting of the Irish Labour History Society on Saturday 5th September 2020.

### OBITUARIES

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

Dermot Doolan	Brendan Halligan
Virginia Hyvarinen	Roy Johnston
Dick Lacy	Terry MacDermott
Charles Mooney	Pádraigín Ní Mhurchú

*We deeply regret their passing and extend our sympathy to their families & friends.*

#### *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 committee*

<b>President</b>	Dr. Kieran Jack McGinley
<b>Vice President</b>	Fionnuala Richardson
<b>Secretary</b>	Kevin Murphy
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ed. Penrose
<b>Assistant Secretary</b>	Eddie Soye
<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	Seamus Moriarty

#### **Committee Members**

Seán Byers, Pat Carroll, Paddy Cole, Lisa Connell, John Cunningham, Leah Dowdall,  
John Feely, Adrian Grant, Rayner Lysaght, & Yvonne O'Callaghan.

Cllr Mícheál Mac Donncha and Mary Muldowney were co-opted onto the committee since our last AGM.

## **Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

The AGM was held in the Fórsa Premises on Roxborough Road in Limerick, thanks to the assistance co-operation of Limerick Trades Council and Fórsa. This decision was taken to mark the centenary of the Limerick Soviet of 1919, following on from a request from SIPTU's DGS Ethel Buckley for ILHS members involvement in a SIPTU event the previous day. The meeting itself was followed by an excellent talk from member Liam Cahill on Soviet. Draft minutes of the meeting have been circulated to members by email.

### **Financial Report**

This is available in a separate document and the Society Treasurer Ed Penrose will report on this.

### **Committee Meetings**

The Committee met on average every second month, with correspondence by email also.

**Saothar Editors:** Dr Mary McAuliffe and Dr Leanne Lane (Saothar 45 & 46)

**Saothar Business Manager:** Ross Higgins (Saothar 45)

### **Publications/Information Stands**

The Society organised to hold stalls at a number of history events and labour movement conferences over the past year, including at the EPSU Conference in Dublin, the ICTU & SIPTU Biennial Conferences, a May Day event in Cork and at labour history conferences in Belfast, Dublin and Galway.

### **2020 Conference**

Preparations for the Conference that was scheduled to take place in September 2020 involved much work throughout the year. The Officers would like to acknowledge the work of the organising committee on the programme and seeking sponsorship.

### **Charities Regulatory Authority Returns**

The Society continues to make annual returns to the Charities Regulatory Authority as required.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Individual Membership**

Ensuring members' records and contact details are up to date is an ongoing task for the Society. A list of members' email addresses continues to be used to communicate with members and to publicise events. Members are strongly encouraged to provide their email address to the Society if they have not done so already and to inform us when possible of any change in postal or email address. Members with eircom.net email addresses were contacted to inform us if they planned on changing their email address.

An increasing number of members now join the Society or renew their membership directly through the website [www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com](http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com) and the take-up in online payments via pay-pal continues to increase. A reminder email about membership fees was circulated in early January.

### **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 of Museum**

The premises continues to be staffed by participants from Community Employment Schemes. Their work ensures that access to the Library and Archive is available to students and researchers Monday to Friday (currently strictly by appointment only). They continue to assist in the maintenance of the building, the addition of content to our website and to the day-to-day administration of the archives and library. 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.

## **Premises**

The Society wishes to express their gratitude to the Office of Public Works and their staff for their continued co-operation in relation to the day-to-day running of the premises in Beggars Bush. Much preparatory work was undertaken to ensure the premises adhered to public health guidelines, prior to re-opening in recent months.

## **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 were the following: PSEU, CPSU & ASTI material. Members Shay Cody, John Horne, Rayner Lysaght, Jack McGinley, Kevin Murphy & Eddie Soye all donated material. Particular thanks to John Gibbons also for agreeing to donate oral history recordings from his research.

## **Website**

Further content has been added to our website [www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com](http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com) over the past twelve months, including the long unavailable first volume of Saothar. 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](http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com). The Society has a Facebook page which also share details of upcoming ILHS and labour history events.

## **ACTIVITIES & EVENTS**

An event was held in Dublin in January 2019, in association with the Labour Party, to mark the centenary of the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil.

ILHS member Pádraig Yeates delivered the 2019 Hugh Geraghty Memorial Lecture with an excellent talk on the Belfast Engineering Strike of 1919. This event took place as part of MayFest 2019 and was held in association with the Clé Club. We would like to thank them for their co-operation.

The Autumn Conference took place in Dublin on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th October 2019. The theme of the conference was the history of ICTU since its formation sixty years ago. ICTU General Secretary Patricia King gave an interesting overview of the history and development of Congress in Fórsa Offices in Nerny's Court on the Friday evening, which was immediately followed by the launch of ILHS member Dr Mike Mecham's biography of William Walker. The Society would like to acknowledge the assistance of Fórsa in hosting this event. Proceedings moved to Beggars Bush on the Saturday, with a range of insightful talks and panel discussions dealing with the history of organised Labour on the island of Ireland over recent decades. The ILHS would like to thank all speakers, and in particular those from Northern Ireland, for their co-operation with the event.

The Society circulated details of many other labour history events held throughout Ireland during 2019, either by emailing members or by posting on our Facebook page.

The Hugh Geraghty Event was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 5th May in association with the Clé Club, as part of the MayFest event.

The Universities Ireland conference is scheduled to take place online on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November 'State Formation, Political Violence and Civil Resistance'. Details have been emailed to members.

The Society plan to organise events in the coming months, depending on the public health guidance.

## **PUBLICATIONS & PUBLICITY**

### **Saothar**

Saothar 44 was launched at the 2019 AGM and available for members to collect on the day of the meeting. The Society wishes to acknowledge the work of co-editors Mary McAuliffe and Martin Maguire on the volume. Martin stepped down as co-editor and Dr Leanne Lane took over as co-editor with Mary McAuliffe for Saothar 45. The Society wishes to acknowledge the work of the co-editors on the volume. We also thank all contributors to the journal. The work of business manager Ross Higgins and printers CRM Design & Print is also very much appreciated by the Society. It is possible to order back copies of Saothar still in stock through the ILHS website.

## Other Publications

Several members and contributors to the work of the Society also authored and contributed to various history books in the twelve months since the last AGM. These include: Dr Mike Mecham - *William Walker: Social Activist and Belfast Labourist*, Tom Wall - *Dachau to the Dolomites: The Irishmen, Himmler's Special Prisoners and the End of WWII*, Mary McAuliffe – *Margaret Skinnider*, Leanne Lane – *Dorothy McArdle*, Francis Devine & Patrick Smylie *Left Lives in 20th Century Ireland Volume 3 – Communist Lives*.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ILHS Member Dr Mike Mecham has joined the Executive Committee of the Society for the Study of Labour History. Member Stephen Clancy is our contact person for the Scottish Labour History Society. Ed Penrose & Pat Bolger have been encouraging a number of trade union groups in the US to nominate a USA contact for the 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 Affiliates

SIPTU, FORSA, CONNECT, MANDATE, ICTU, INTO, ASTI, IFUT, AHCPS, NUJ, CWU, TSSA, INTO, ESU, FSU, CWHT, TUI, NIPSA, Dublin Council of Trade Unions, Fermanagh Council of Trade Unions, Limerick Council of Trade Unions, Bray Council of Trade Unions.

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We wish to apologise to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for the omission of their name from our Corporate list in last years Annual Report. As one of our original and longest supporters this mistake was a particular embarresment to us.

### Reminder

If you paid last year's Membership by means other than by a Bank Standing Order, PayPal, Cheque, Postal Order or Cash, your payment is now due unless you have paid since January.

Payment can be made on our website

[Irishlabourhistorysociety.com](http://Irishlabourhistorysociety.com)

**We thank you for your continuing support.**