

# Annual Report 2016



## Chairman's Report 2016

### A year of research and collaborations

2016 was one of our busiest years ever with almost 40 events and outings run in 12 short months. Several of these events were collaborations with other organisations such as the Tower Museum, Donegal County Council, the Irish Labour History Society, Amazing Grace Festival, Feel Good Fortnight, local schools and the National Heritage Council to name but a few.

2016 got off to an exhilarating start with a well-attended hill climb and field survey of Binion Hill (Clonmany), followed in March by a field trip to an early monastic site outside Bunrana accompanied by a talk by Angela McLaughlin.

April saw the society give a whole evening of talks based around the theme of evictions and land ownership in Inishowen for the Amazing Grace Festival which featured Mari McLaughlin, myself (Dr Michael Liam Gorry) and a harrowing episode from the documentary series *When Ireland Starved*. Several important historical discoveries, and never before seen documents, were presented on the night. Later in the month, I was very honoured to be asked to give a talk for the Heritage Council at the Gresham Hotel in Dublin as part of their National Heritage Week organiser training day.



Huge crowd for Dr. Larry McNutt's talk on the history of Bunrana



A small section of our Mabel Colhoun exhibition, which was located in the centre of the Guildhall's Great Hall. From left: John Hegarty, Ronan McConnell, Michael Liam Gorry, Lisa Henderson, John McCarron.

*Cherish the past...*

**"Recording, protecting and promoting the history and heritage of West Inishowen."**

## Studying and sharing

At the end of April former WIH&HS chair Dr Adrian Grant, with the aid of our study group, designed and facilitated a whole day of events relating to 1916 in the Northwest: 'Easter 1916 Rising: Workshop, Talk & Debate'. For the event WIH&HS successfully received a government grant from Donegal County Council.

The society's study group met many times during the first half of the year and planned our highly successful Summer School, our National Heritage Week events and our acclaimed Mabel Colhoun exhibition that ran in the great hall of the Guildhall (Derry) during the 'Festival of Archaeology' in July.

The theme of our 2016 Summer School was based around renowned 19<sup>th</sup> century trade unionist and local man, John Doherty. For the week we planned a whole range of events with highlights including riveting talks from Ultan Cowley, Dr Emmet O Connor and Dr Adrian Grant. We even had an excursion to Mamore Gap to see how some of the 19<sup>th</sup> century rural poor lived part of the year in boolie huts with archaeologist and WIH&HS Vice-chair John Hegarty.

### Awards and logos

June saw the Chairman (myself), the Treasurer (Andrew Garvey-Williams) and the Vice-chair (John Hegarty) travel to Kilkenny to receive our National Heritage Week organiser award from the Heritage Council for best 2015 NHW event ('Archaeology for Kids/Fun Day') in the category 'Cool for Kids'.



*...invest in our future*

Visit [www.buncranahistory.com](http://www.buncranahistory.com) or find us on Facebook

## Bringing history to life...

New member John Mc Carron, in collaboration with our study group, helped design and perfect the society's new logo, which in turn led to the creation of our new pop up screen (designed by our study group and Andrew Garvey-Williams). John also set up our new Twitter page.

### Archives, art and fundraising

In August, we ran one of our most diverse National Heritage Week programmes ever, featuring everything from early medieval themed walks to family fun days. Highlights included a walk around Dunree hill and beach with John Hegarty, an illustrated talk in Star of the Sea Church by Liam McLaughlin and a full house in our headquarters (The Exchange) for Dr Larry McNutt's fascinating talk about the history of Buncrana.



The end of the year saw research committee trips to PRONI in Belfast, a Lough Swilly railway research field trip, and preparation for our upcoming cataloguing of the Mabel Colhoun collection. In December, John McCarron and Andrew Garvey-Williams designed and built an amazing WIH&HS Christmas Tree for St Mary's Oratory as part of the 2016 Buncrana Christmas Tree Festival. At the end of the year, Quiz Master Dermot Quigley and WIH&HS Secretary Lisa Henderson organised our ever popular end of year fundraiser the WIH&HS Christmas quiz.

## Treasurer's Report - 2016 Accounts

### Income

Membership fees	€200.00
Donations	€645.12
Fundraising	€168.19
Awards(Tidy Towns)	€250.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>€1,263.31</b>

### Expenditure

Bank charges/stamp duty	€36.64
Exchange Rent (inc. €200 from 2015 & €200 into 2017)	€1,200.00
Honorarium/speakers expenses	€50.00
Event expenses	€12.65
Insurance	€353.50
Purchase roll up banner	€90
Stationery	€20
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>€1,762.79</b>
<b>2016 Deficit</b>	<b>-€499.48</b>

### Bank balance

Bank Balance 1/1/16	€1,903.28
Current Bank balance 31/1/17	€1,403.80



## Coming soon in 2017 - WIHH Spring Season

*We have a jam-packed programme of events planned for 2017. Here's just a taste of what you have to look forward to. Please become a Member of WIHH Society in order to keep in touch with everything that is going on and to take advantage of special Members-Only events and opportunities:*

The fifth annual **Amazing Grace Festival** (6 - 12 April, 2017) will explore the theme "Hope" with a whole range of events, exhibitions and programmes for all the family. Full programme on [www.amazinggrace.ie](http://www.amazinggrace.ie).

### **The John Newton Lecture: Newton the Mentor**

Thursday 6 April at 8pm at The Exchange, Castle Avenue, Buncrana

Guest speaker, the Rev. Steve Donald - author of "Like a Father among his children" - explores the profound impact John Newton had on the lives of many individuals including the politician and abolitionist, William Wilberforce.

### **The John Newton Experience**

Open Thursday 6 to Tuesday 11 April at the Church of Ireland hall, Church Street, Buncrana

10.30am to 5pm weekdays (times variable on Saturday and Sunday, see festival programme for full details). Don't miss this fascinating and interactive exhibition about the life and work of John Newton, suitable for all ages. Follow the story of John Newton and his connection with Lough Swilly. Learn about the history of "Amazing Grace", the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and more. Featuring new and expanded features. Admission free.

### **Féile Dóchas**

Saturday 8 April from 2 to 10pm @ The Shorefront, Buncrana

Féile Dóchas (or Hope Fest) is a dynamic all-age creative arts festival to mark the anniversary of John Newton's arrival in Lough Swilly on 8 April 1748 and the "birth" of the Amazing Grace story with loads to see and do along Buncrana's shorefront. Tour the outdoor exhibition of giant sculptures and enjoy a full programme of live music, interactive music workshops, performance poetry, dance, arts and crafts, fun food, circus skills and games, and much more.

### **Amazing Grace Guided Walking Tour**

Tuesday 11 April from 2 - 3pm

Meet outside the Tourist Information Centre, Railway Road Buncrana. Enjoy a free, guided history tour from the Amazing Grace Park to the Amazing Grace Viewing Point near Castle Bridge. The tour will finish at The Exchange in Castle Avenue with a refreshments. Transfers back to the Tourist Office available on request or to the John Newton Experience.

### **Josef Locke - the People's Tenor - a talk by Nuala Mc Allister Hart**

Friday 21 April at 8pm at The Exchange, Castle Avenue, Buncrana.

More details soon.

**Mabel Calhoun Exhibition - July 2017.** Details tbc.

**Heritage Week 2017: 19 - 27 August.** Details tbc.



### **Contact us:**

**Phone: 074 9362572**

### **Email:**

[westinishowenhistory@gmail.com](mailto:westinishowenhistory@gmail.com)

### **Mailing address:**

WIHH c/o The Exchange,  
Castle Avenue, Buncrana

Visit [www.buncranahistory.com](http://www.buncranahistory.com)  
or find us on Facebook

### **Become a member!**

**Membership costs just €10 per year  
and includes opportunities for a  
range of members-only events as  
well as small research grants.**