



# THE NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

## Society Handbook

2020~2021

Updated - 11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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## GOVERNANCE OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, number NIC106071, and since 1990 it has had registered charitable status with HMRC, number XR22524, with the consequent financial advantages of exemption from rates and entitlement to reclaim Gift Aid.

The governing document of the Society consists of two parts: the **Society Constitution** and the **Branch Constitution**, which are on the website and to which all Branches must adhere.

The main legal guideline for the Society and Branches is that they act in accordance with the Charities Acts (Northern Ireland) 2008 & 2013, the Society Constitution and the Branch Constitution.

## OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

**To promote and encourage the public and personal study of world-wide family history, genealogy, heraldry and local history with particular reference to the North of Ireland.**

In furtherance of the above Objects the Society shall have the following aims:

- (a) to hold lectures and discussions and to organise research visits for Society members and members of the public;
- (b) to receive, hold and maintain a library of printed works and other materials for use by Society members and members of the public;
- (c) to receive, preserve, transcribe or publish source materials, including documents and monumental inscriptions, such materials to remain the property of the Society except where otherwise agreed in writing;
- (d) to work in conjunction with similar societies and supportive bodies such as churches, libraries, record offices and educational establishments;
- (e) to publish the Journal "*North Irish Roots*".

The income and property of the Society shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the Objects.

## ORGANISATION OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is a voluntary, non profit making organisation, depending on the financial support of amateurs interested in Family History and volunteer effort in running the Society. The Society is not a Research Agency, although we like to put people in contact with one another.

The Society had its beginnings in a family history group formed in Bangor in 1979 following a series of talks by Kathleen Neill. It was chaired by Aiken McClelland (the Librarian/Archivist at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum who died in 1981) and then by Brendan Adams (a dialectologist at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum who died in 1982) and then by David Honneyman (a lecturer at Stranmillis College). Over the years, as the interest in genealogy has grown, the group has expanded by creating a number of Branches in the North of Ireland to form the Society, which now has over a thousand members here and overseas; at present the Branches are:

**Ballymena | Belfast | Causeway Coast & Glens** (based in Coleraine) |  
**Foyle** (based in 'Derry) | **Killyleagh | Larne | Lisburn | Newtownabbey | North Armagh**  
**| South Tyrone** (based near Dungannon) | **Tyrone** (based in Omagh)

Many members have worked hard to develop the Society under the leadership of a succession of dedicated Presidents: Dr David Honneyman [1982-1983 & 1992-1994], the late Mr Randal Gill [1984-1992 & 2002-2012], the late Rev. Dr Hugh Hezlett [1983-1984], the late Mr Samuel Bracegirdle [1994-1997], Mr John Bassett [1997-2002] and Miss Rosemary Sibbett [2012-2016]. Miss Ann Robinson was elected President in 2016.

## TRUSTEES, COUNCIL OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEER ASSISTANTS

The Society is run by the Council, all the Officers and Members of which are Trustees for the purposes of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Under the Society Constitution, the five Statutory Officers are:

**President, Chairperson, General Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer**

The other Officers are determined from time to time by Council and are:

**Vice President, Vice Chairperson, Assistant Secretary,  
Assistant Membership Secretary, Assistant Treasurer,  
Librarian, Education & Development Officer,  
Projects Coordinator, Publicity Officer**

Under the Society Constitution, the **Chairperson**, the **Secretary** and the **Treasurer** of each Branch serve *ex officio* as Members of Council.

The Officers of the Society are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting in September. In addition Council may appoint Members of the Society to Council and may appoint Officers from the Members of Council. Council is assisted by Volunteer Assistants (who are not Members of Council unless elected or appointed in accordance with the Society Constitution). The current holders of all these posts are listed in the *Who's Who Handbook*.

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### E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Anyone making a general enquiry:

**Nquire@nifhs.org**

**Members** requesting Lookups in Irish Section Books and Transcriptions:

**LookUp@nifhs.org**

To contact a member who has published member's interests on the website:

**MemInt@nifhs.org**

To contact the DNA Project Co-ordinator:

**DNA@nifhs.org**

To contact the Chairperson:

**Chair@nifhs.org**

To contact the Librarian:

**Librarian@nifhs.org**

To contact the General Secretary:

**Secretary@nifhs.org**

To contact the President:

**President@nifhs.org**

To contact the Treasurer:

**Treasurer@nifhs.org**

To contact the Membership Secretary:

**Membership@nifhs.org**

To contact the Education and Development Officer:

**Education@nifhs.org**

For Research Centre bookings:

**Bookings@nifhs.org**

To contact the Publicity Officer:

**Publicity@nifhs.org**

To contact the Projects Co-ordinator:

**Projects@nifhs.org**

To contact the Editor of the Journal *North Irish Roots*:

**NRoots@nifhs.org**

To contact the Shop Manager:

**Shop@nifhs.org**

To contact the Webmaster:

**Web@nifhs.org**

To contact the Secretary of a Branch:

**Ballymena@nifhs.org**

**Foyle@nifhs.org**

**Newtownabbey@nifhs.org**

**Belfast@nifhs.org**

**Killyleagh@nifhs.org**

**NorthArmagh@nifhs.org**

**Causeway@nifhs.org**

**Larne@nifhs.org**

**SouthTyrone@nifhs.org**

**Lisburn@nifhs.org**

**Tyrone@nifhs.org**

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### COUNCIL MEETINGS

The direction of the Society is the responsibility of the Trustees, who hold Council meetings each month except July and December. In line with this direction the Society Officers undertake the administration of the Society with the aid of the Voluntary Assistants and report back to Council. The Council meetings are run by the Chairperson, assisted by the General Secretary and the Minutes Secretary. Reports are presented at each meeting by the Treasurer and the Membership Secretary, with the opportunity for other Society Officers and Branch Officers to raise matters. Members who are not Trustees may attend but not vote.

## PUBLIC BENEFIT

As a registered charity the Society exists to provide a public benefit as well as resources and services for its Members. The Society welcomes visitors to its Branch meetings and to its Research Centre. The Society also mounts courses for the general public. Attendance at a number of family history fairs and other events in Ireland and Great Britain enables the Society to give help and advice to many members of the public. In addition it can provide organisations planning events with speakers or a stall with family history research information.

## PUBLICITY

The main methods of publicity are the website [www.NIFHS.org](http://www.NIFHS.org), FaceBook [www.facebook.com/NIFHS/](https://www.facebook.com/NIFHS/), Twitter [www.twitter.com/NIFHS/](https://www.twitter.com/NIFHS/) and YouTube [www.youtube.com/user/NIFHS/](https://www.youtube.com/user/NIFHS/). These are managed by the Webmaster [Web@NIFHS.org](mailto:Web@NIFHS.org) and Publicity Officer [Publicity@NIFHS.org](mailto:Publicity@NIFHS.org). In addition Branches publicise their programmes in local newspapers and by leaving leaflets in libraries and elsewhere and most have their own FaceBook accounts. The Society's profile is raised by attendance at fairs and other events.

## ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS

The Society is represented on several organisations.

### FHF - THE FAMILY HISTORY FEDERATION



The **FHF** covers over 160 societies in the British Isles and further afield, including surname societies and other specialist societies (however Scotland has a separate organisation, the SAFHS - Scottish Association of Family History Societies, [www.safhs.org.uk](http://www.safhs.org.uk)).

It publishes a newsletter and its *Really Useful Leaflet*, it organises, sponsors and attends meetings, seminars and fairs, it represents member societies at these events and provides societies with insurance and legal advice and it lobbies for better access to sources. See [www.familyhistoryfederation.com](http://www.familyhistoryfederation.com).

### FULS - THE FEDERATION FOR ULSTER LOCAL STUDIES



The Society is a member of **FULS**. The Federation was set up to promote and assist with the study and recording of the history, antiquities and folk-life of Ulster, to develop communication and co-operation between local historical groups and between these groups and relevant statutory and voluntary organisations.

It has about a hundred members and publishes a newsletter and the journal *Due North*, formerly *Ulster Local Studies*. It maintains a *Register of Speakers and Tour Guides*, with contact details for over 150 speakers on over 500 topics of historical, archaeological and genealogical interest, as well as information about interesting tours. See [www.fuls.org.uk](http://www.fuls.org.uk).

### CIGO - THE COUNCIL FOR IRISH GENEALOGICAL ORGANISATIONS



The Society is a member of **CIGO** and nominates a representative to attend its meetings. The Council is a lobby group for the various national and international organisations sharing an interest in Irish genealogical research.

It represents about a dozen societies in Ireland and has links with various overseas societies that have an interest in Irish family history. See [www.cigo.ie](http://www.cigo.ie).



The Society nominates a representative to the **PRONI** User Group. PRONI is the official archive for Northern Ireland and, unlike the National Archives in Kew, its collection is not restricted to official documents. See [www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni).

## FINANCE

The Society's accounts are managed by the Treasurer [Treasurer@NIFHS.org](mailto:Treasurer@NIFHS.org) with assistance from the Bookkeeper. In addition the Librarian [Librarian@NIFHS.org](mailto:Librarian@NIFHS.org) is authorised to purchase books for the Library and to sell surplus books, the Membership Secretary [Membership@NIFHS.org](mailto:Membership@NIFHS.org) maintains records of membership and deals with Associate members' subscriptions and capitation fees from Branches and the Shop Manager [Shop@NIFHS.org](mailto:Shop@NIFHS.org) deals with the sale and restocking of items.

The Treasurer reports to each meeting of Council on the state of each bank account and the year-to-date breakdown of receipts and expenditure. At the end of the financial year, which runs from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, the accounts are scrutinised by an Independent Examiner and his report, together with the approved accounts are sent to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The Society's accounts are as follows.

Danske Bank	Sort Code	Account	Notes
Business Investment A/c	95-01-21	40283053	Used by the bank but not used directly by the Society.
Danske Charity No.1 A/c	95-01-21	90283037	Used for most transactions including by Treasurer for regular payments and for lodging cheques and cash arising from sales and capitation and subscriptions.
Danske Charity No.2 A/c	95-01-21	90283045	Used by the Librarian and for clearing the PayPal accounts.
Fixed Term Deposit A/c	95-01-21	00541524	Deposit account for reserves.
MasterCard Corporate Debit card	95-01-49	40312215	Occasionally used when cash, cheques and BACS payments are inappropriate; linked to No.1 A/c.

PayPal	E-mail Account	Notes
Membership A/c	<a href="mailto:Membership@nifhs.org">Membership@nifhs.org</a>	Used for online subscriptions by Associate Members and for online donations.
Shop A/c	<a href="mailto:Shop@nifhs.org">Shop@nifhs.org</a>	Used for online purchases from the Shop.
PayPal Here - Card reader	<a href="mailto:Membership@nifhs.org">Membership@nifhs.org</a>	Used for card payments for membership and sales; linked to Membership A/c.

The principal sources of income and expenditure, with approximate amounts for the last year, are as follows.

Receipts	£	Payments	£
Associate Membership subscriptions	12,500	Rent and electricity	10,000
Branch Membership capitation	7,000	<i>North Irish Roots</i>	10,500
Sale of Society publications	3,500	Publications purchased for sale	1,000
Gift Aid from HMRC	3,000	Insurance	1,500
Class income	2,500	Attendance at Fairs	1,500
Other receipts	3,500	Other payments	7,500
Total	£32,000	Total	£32,000

Each Branch maintains its own accounts. Branches hold their Annual General Meetings in May, after which the Branch accounts are consolidated with the Society accounts and the Society's A.G.M. is held in September,

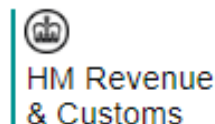
following which the accounts and annual report are sent to the Charity Commission. Branches take it in turn to host the Society's A.G.M.

#### CCNI - THE CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



As mentioned above, the Society is registered with **The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland**, number NIC106071. The Society is thus required to report at the end of each financial year to the Charity Commission. The Society must also inform the Charity Commission of any changes in the Trustees. See [www.charitycommissionni.org.uk](http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk). As a registered charity the Society can claim Gift Aid on donations from U.K. taxpayers.

#### HMRC - HER MAJESTY'S REVENUE AND CUSTOMS



Since 1990 the Society has had registered charitable status with **HMRC**, number XR22524, with the consequent financial advantages of exemption from rates and entitlement to reclaim Gift Aid. Each year the Society reclaims Gift Aid from HMRC. See [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs).

#### MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

There are two types of membership, administered by the Membership Secretary [Membership@NIFHS.org](mailto:Membership@NIFHS.org): Branch Membership and Associate Membership. Within these there is a category called Joint Membership for two Members living at the same address - they pay a smaller annual subscription but receive only one copy of each issue of the journal between them.

Council may confer Honorary Membership upon a member who has made an outstanding contribution to the Objects of the Society. An Honorary Member pays no annual membership subscription and no capitation fee is payable. The following members have been honoured since the Society was founded in 1979:

Dr David Honneyman (2002)  
The late Mr Randal Gill (2002)  
The late Mr Samuel Bracegirdle (2004)  
The late Mrs Jeanne Jordan (2009)  
Mr John Bassett (2011)  
Miss Marjorie Geary (2011)  
Mrs Claire McElhinney (2011)

Mrs Georgie Siberry (2011)  
Mrs Doreen Walker (2014)  
Mr David Deane (2015)  
Mrs Kathleen Neill (2016)  
Miss Rosemary Sibbett (2017)  
Mr Robert Guthrie (2017)

#### BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

All Branch Members are members of the Society and have voting rights at general meetings of the Branch and of the Society. They receive the Society's journal, *North Irish Roots*, and, although joining a particular Branch, may attend the business and social meetings of all of the Branches, use the Research Centre and enjoy such other benefits as the Society may from time to time provide.

Branch Members pay an annual membership subscription to their Branch. This consists of two parts: the capitation fee, which is set by and remitted to the Society for its expenses, and the rest, which is set by and retained by the Branch for its own expenses. The capitation fee covers the cost of the journal and also the Society's running costs, including insurance and the cost of its premises.



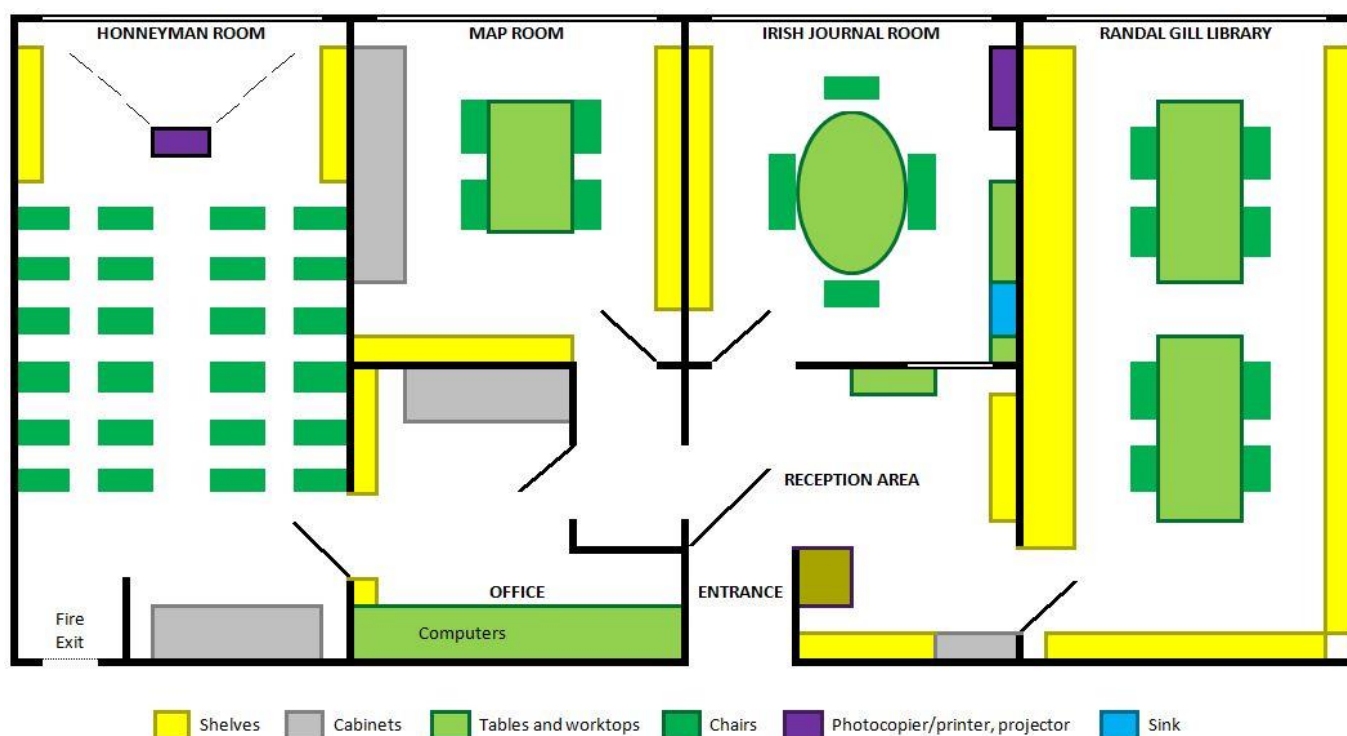
## ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

In addition, there are Associate Members, who do not belong to any Branch and who have no voting rights. These are typically those who are overseas or are not living near a Branch. They receive the Society's journal, *North Irish Roots*, and may use the Research Library, perhaps by requesting free Look Ups, and enjoy such other benefits as the Society may from time to time provide. Associate Members pay an annual membership subscription, which is set by and paid to the Society.

## RESEARCH CENTRE & RESOURCES

The Society's address is

**The North of Ireland Family History Society,  
Unit C4, Valley Business Centre, 67 Church Road,  
Newtownabbey, BT36 7LS, Northern Ireland, U.K.**



The Society has a well-stocked Research Centre at Unit C4 in the Valley Business Centre in Newtownabbey. The Valley Business Centre has a free car park and there is a café on the site. The normal opening hours of the Research Centre are **Tuesdays 2:00pm to 8:00pm**, excepting Christmas, New Year, Easter and July. Check the Calendar page on the website. It can be opened at other times or booked for meetings by arrangement by contacting [Bookings@NIFHS.org](mailto:Bookings@NIFHS.org). For details about how to get to the Research Centre see the Location & Directions page on the website. Members and visitors are asked to sign in and sign out. There is no charge although donations are always welcome to defray the running costs.

The Research Centre houses the Randal Gill Library as well as the Irish Journal Room, the Map Room, the Honneyman Room, which is used for courses and meetings, and the Society's Office.



The facilities include computers, free WiFi, a collection of databases on a computer or on CD, a colour A3 printer/scanner and a computer dedicated to free access to FindMyPast's worldwide collection of databases including its extensive set of British and Irish newspapers.



The Society has named its Library in honour of the late Randal Gill, a founding member of the Society, who was for many years President of the Society and its Librarian; it was he who was mainly responsible for developing its collection.

The Library holds a large collection of books and records of interest to Members researching families in the North of Ireland. Many books and records deal with individual people and many others can provide invaluable background information regarding historical context, places, occupations, military service and so on. The comprehensive Library List is available on the website and is regularly updated by the Librarian [Librarian@NIFHS.org](mailto:Librarian@NIFHS.org) who welcomes donations of books and collections of records.



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### LOOK UP SERVICE

The Society provides a free Look Up Service for Members who are unable to visit the Research Centre in Newtownabbey. The searches apply to resources in the Irish Section, particularly to transcriptions of Church Records, Graveyard Records and Newspaper Records. Also some of the other records such as the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland (PHSI) envelopes of genealogical correspondence can prove fruitful. In other words, we can search those records that are indexed. So books and journals for which we have an index can be searched but not an unindexed volume. Where possible, indexes are being put online so please check those before asking for a search.

To use this service state your name and membership number – e.g. A0001 – in the subject line of your e-mail, state which record set is to be searched, e.g. the PHSI envelopes or the shelfmark of the volume, state which name is to be searched, listing alternative spellings, and if there are likely to be many results, provide as much information as possible to narrow the search. E-mail your request to [Lookup@NIFHS.org](mailto:Lookup@NIFHS.org).

Please bear in mind the following: we have only a few volunteers available to do searches and a volunteer might be in the Research Centre only once a week, or less frequently. Also often a surname will feature many times in the record set and it is not feasible to check them all and sometimes a PHSI envelope may contain a lot of correspondence about different families of the name and it is not feasible to summarise all of it. Because of copyright law we cannot provide a verbatim copy of more than a short extract. So be prepared for the reply “There is too much information to summarise – please employ a professional genealogist”.

For example, when requesting a search of the PHSI envelopes one might ask “Do the M<sup>c</sup>Afee envelopes relate to the family in the townland of Englishtown in the parish of Macosquin? If so, please summarise the information or put me in touch with the correspondent.” This prevents the volunteer having to waste time dealing with the wrong family.

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### TRANSCRIPTIONS & INDEXES

The Transcribed Records fall into the categories:

- Church Records
- Graveyard Records
- Newspaper Records

Many of these are only available in the Library. Subject to copyright law and to permission from the organisations supplying the material and to suppressing “recent” events, we plan to place more of the indexes and transcriptions online as complete records, abbreviated records or surnames only.

For Members unable to visit the Research Centre we offer a free Look Up Service.



## IRISH SECTION

The transcriptions are just a small part of the Library's collection of about 3,000 books relating to family history in Ireland. These include church records, family histories, civil records, gravestone inscriptions, newspaper announcements, occupations, education records, photographic information and books covering many of Ulster's towns and villages. There is also the Special Collection, consisting of forty or so rarer works including, for example, a couple of dozen volumes of *Preservation of Memorials of the Dead*, the *Annals of Ulster*, the Rev. George Hill's *Historical Account of Plantation in Ulster*, Dr John Logan's *Records of the Medical Societies of Belfast 1822 - 1884* and various Peerages.

## FAMILY TREES ETC.

There is an extensive collection of material on particular families:

- about 300 books,
- a collection of submitted Family trees covering about 1,000 surnames,
- a collection of Ancestor Charts submitted by members and covering over 3,000 surnames
- and a large collection of Mourning Cards covering many names.

The indexes are online.



All Members are encouraged to submit Profile Forms listing their research interests, to submit Family Trees and to submit Ancestor Charts.

Over many years members of the public seeking genealogical information have written to the archivist of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland (PHSI). This correspondence was filed away in a great many envelopes, which are now on permanent loan to the Society and have been indexed by Members of the Society. Each envelope is numbered and is labelled with a surname and most include references to other surnames. Altogether almost 4,000 surnames are mentioned; for some names there is next to no information and for some there is a wealth of genealogical material. The index is online.

For Members unable to visit the Research Centre we offer a free Look Up Service.

And for those missing individuals, check the Census Strays - this online collection contains details of over 15,000 records of persons living in households elsewhere with one or more people of Irish origin.

## IRISH JOURNAL ROOM

The Society maintains sets of more than 50 Irish journals in its Research Centre, including a complete run of the Society's journal *North Irish Roots*. Most of these journals are published by family history or local history societies, mainly from the North of Ireland, and provide a wealth of information to support one's family history research. Many of the journals have had the titles of their articles indexed resulting in two Indexes of subjects as follows:

- Index to Gravestone Inscriptions Extracted from Journals
- Index to Miscellaneous Records Extracted from Journals

As well as the Irish journals there are sets of several genealogical periodicals.

A number of the Society's Branches produce Newsletters and the Society emails E-Newsletters at least twice a year to Members. Copies of all these are shelved here.

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## ORDNANCE SURVEY MEMOIRS

The *Ordnance Survey Memoirs* are a set of 40 volumes plus a comprehensive index of names of people and places. These descriptions of Ulster parishes and their people were compiled between 1821 and 1840 when Ireland was being mapped by the Ordnance Survey. They provide a valuable source for the family historian.

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## JSTOR



JSTOR (Journal STORage) is a not-for-profit organization that digitally preserves scholarly publications for use by researchers. JSTOR, in collaboration with the Queen's University of Belfast, has digitized many journals and other materials, some dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to form the Ireland Collection. This includes the Society's journal *North Irish Roots*. There is a "moving wall", which means that the issues of the most recent three years will not yet be available online.

The Society has arranged with JSTOR that all of our members who, in their membership forms, have given an e-mail address will be able to register for free access to all of the Ireland Collection. They receive an e-mail from JSTOR with instructions on how to register and, if they wish to avail of this opportunity, they have free access to all the publications while they remain members of NIFHS. JSTOR provides good facilities for searching the Ireland Collection or for browsing individual issues of journals.

The Society welcomes this collaboration with JSTOR for several reasons. Firstly, this is a useful resource for our members as it makes available a wealth of material that otherwise might be difficult to find. Secondly, it makes our members' interests available to a very wide range of people, who may have similar interests and thus may be able to help our members. Thirdly, it provides excellent worldwide publicity for the Society. Fourthly, it brings in revenue to the Society for, although access to the Ireland Collection is free to our members, it is available to libraries and other users on subscription.

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## MAP ROOM & DIRECTORIES

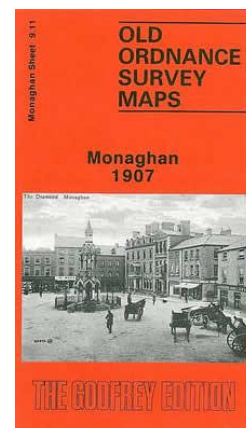
The Society has a good collection of maps in the Map Room of its Research Centre. There is a wide range of Ordnance Survey maps for Northern Ireland stored in cabinets and comprising virtually a complete set of the 6 Inch to 1 Mile series. These maps were published county by county and so are numbered in squares by the name of the county.

From 1950 maps are based on the Irish Grid with a single reference system for the whole island. We have a good selection of maps for the following scales: 1 : 1,250 1 : 2,500 1 : 10,000 1 : 25,000. Full details of the holdings and their locations are held in a file in the Map Room.

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## ALAN GODFREY MAPS FOR SALE

We also stock in our online shop Alan Godfrey's reduced scale copies of old Ordnance Survey maps of Ulster – half are town maps and half are based on one inch to the mile maps covering wider areas. As all these maps predate the Second World War, they show the configuration of streets before bomb damage, after which many streets in Belfast were lost. Each map includes a history of the area, and some include extracts from contemporary directories.



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## SURPLUS ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS FOR SALE

In the Research Centre there are a lot of old Ordnance Survey maps for sale for £1 or less. These are duplicates and are not in a new condition but, if they cover the areas in which you are interested, they are very good value.

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## DIRECTORIES

The Society has a large collection of Directories in its Map Room. Most of these are street directories specific to Ireland with information on the office holders and businesses in each town or village, such as *Thom's Directories*; some have comprehensive street-by-street listings of householders.

There are also occupational directories, such as the *Medical Register*, and many volumes of biographies of individuals, such as the *Dictionary of National Biography* and *Who's Who*.

There is also a set of Telephone Directories for Northern Ireland from 1966 together with some from the Republic of Ireland.

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## OTHER COUNTRIES

There is a small collection of about 200 items pertaining to England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, Australia & New Zealand, India, South Africa and the United States of America. There are also some CDs and DVDs and Microfiches relating to the United Kingdom as a whole or to those other countries.

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## HONEYMAN ROOM & COURSES



The Society acquired this room for meetings and for mounting a programme of courses for family historians. The room is named in honour of Dr David Honneyman, a founding member of the Society and its first President and a lecturer by profession.

A programme of courses is mounted each autumn and spring and these have proved popular. The cost is kept low and is used to defray the rent of the premises. The courses are open to the general public as well as to members and need to be booked in advance as places are limited.

Members are also encouraged to set up Special Interest Groups, for which the Honneyman Room provides a suitable venue.

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## COURSES

The short courses cover a wide range of topics, suiting both the beginner and the experienced researcher. Generally each course consists of one, two or three sessions, each of two hours. Most courses can be delivered elsewhere if a suitable venue and adequate demand exist. Courses are arranged by the Education & Development Officer [Education@NIFHS.org](mailto:Education@NIFHS.org).

The following list shows the titles of more than thirty topics, many of which have been delivered several times.

A Beginner's Guide to Facebook  
A Beginner's Guide to PowerPoint  
A Beginner's Guide to Word  
Beginning Your Research  
Breaking through Brickwalls

Dublin Archives & Visit to Dublin  
Emigration to Australia and New Zealand  
Family History using PowerPoint  
Family Tree Maker: Basics and Benefits  
It's All About Me

Land Records & Maps  
 Life in Ulster in the 1830s  
 Making the Most of Your Autosomal DNA Results  
 Manipulating Images in Word  
 Memory Box – a Creative Craft Class  
 Photo Restoration for Beginners  
 Researching Military Ancestors  
 Scrapping Your Family History – an introduction to scrap-booking  
 Starting your Genealogy – Beginner's Course  
 Tagging Your Family History – a creative craft class  
 Technology for Genealogy

The Advantages of Y-DNA  
 The Plantation of Ulster – Names & Places  
 Transcription – Methods and Benefits  
 Understanding Heraldry  
 Using Family Search  
 Using Gedmatch  
 Using Newspapers for Family History Research  
 Valuation Records  
 Websites for Genealogy  
 Writing Up Your Family History  
 You've taken the DNA Test, what next? – Understanding Family Finder



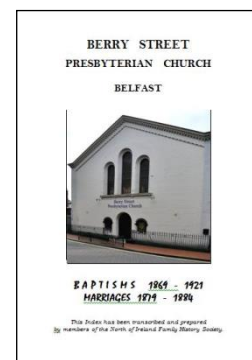
For the benefit of those who cannot attend, a series of Course Notes booklets is published for some courses.

## PROJECTS & OTHER ACTIVITIES

Over the years many Members have taken part in projects. Sometimes these are organised by a Branch and sometimes they are undertaken by Members from several Branches. Most projects have resulted in publications on the Library shelves and several led to published books or CDs. Anyone contemplating a project should discuss it with the Projects Officer [Projects@NIFHS.org](mailto:Projects@NIFHS.org) to find out whether others have tackled it and to consider any legal or other constraints.

## TRANSCRIBING & INDEXING PROJECTS

Many projects entail recording graveyard inscriptions (over 300 graveyards so far; we also have a large collection of published volumes of graveyard inscriptions). Other projects are concerned with transcribing and indexing church registers of baptisms, marriages and burials (over 300 churches so far). Some collect the announcements of births, marriages and deaths from old newspapers.



## CHURCH MAPPING PROJECT

The Society is developing a map based project with information on all post 1600 Ulster churches and their records. For each the database will have a photograph, a brief history and a list of extant records and where they may be found. The information will be made available online using a map based system in collaboration with the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland.

## NORTH OF IRELAND DNA PROJECT & DNA INTEREST GROUP & BALLYCARRY PROJECT

The Society has established a project to use DNA testing as an aid to making genealogical connections within and between families whose roots are in the North of Ireland. The project promotes DNA testing by those whose heritage is from the North of Ireland; offers information, support and training for those who test and manage DNA tests of others; shares DNA results to facilitate genealogical connections; and carries out research into the DNA of the North of Ireland.

The Society provides volunteer Project Administrators and Co-Administrators who promote and administer the project via branch meetings, local and family history events, social media and other appropriate communication channels to Society members, their families and members of the public with North of Ireland roots.

The project covers **Y-DNA**, mitochondrial DNA (**mtDNA**) and autosomal DNA (**atDNA**). To aid the analysis of results, standards of testing and the efficiency of support, the project promotes testing through FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA), although not exclusively. Discounts are available from FTDNA if orders are placed through the DNA project.

Short explanatory courses are arranged in the Research Centre or elsewhere and there is a DNA Interest Group that meets monthly. Consult [DNA@NIFHS.org](mailto:DNA@NIFHS.org) for further information.

The Society's Ballycarry Project is using a combination of DNA and traditional record based research to build an extensive study of one community, with the aim of reconstructing some of the missing 19<sup>th</sup> century census records.

#### FAMILY TREE MAKER INTEREST GROUP

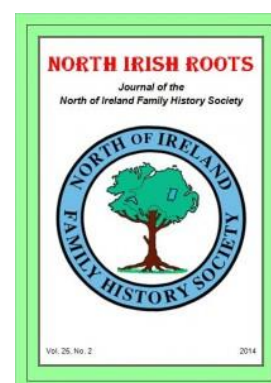
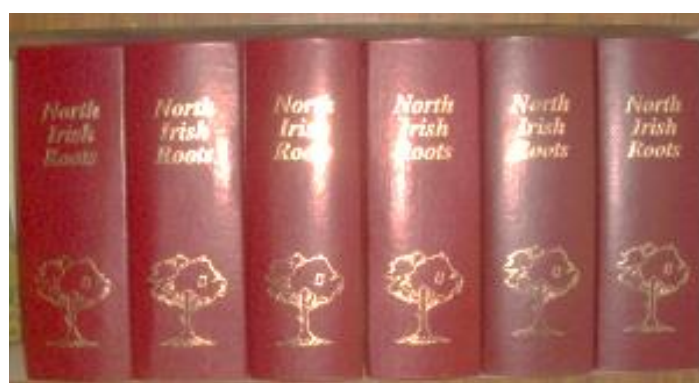
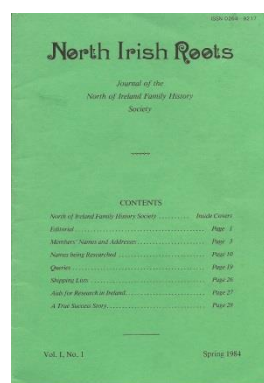
FamilyTreeMaker is a popular genealogical software product used by many Members and this group meets once a month on a self-help basis to learn to make the best use of it.

#### NIFHS JOURNAL: *NORTH IRISH ROOTS*

The Society publishes its journal *North Irish Roots* twice a year in spring and autumn. All members are encouraged to contribute to the journal. This might be an article or a brief note. The Editor [NRoots@NIFHS.org](mailto:NRoots@NIFHS.org) welcomes suggestions for articles or notes. Profile forms are available at [www.nifhs.org/resources/forms/](http://www.nifhs.org/resources/forms/) to enable Members to submit a query or a list of names being researched for publication.

The Objects of the Society are **to promote and encourage the public and personal study of world-wide family history, genealogy, heraldry and local history with particular reference to the North of Ireland** and the Editorial Committee welcomes articles of interest in these areas. Submissions may be about a family line, a useful resource, a book review, websites, photographs, maps, personal recollections or family lore. Often members are most interested in references to names to which they may connect.

Please ensure that you own the copyright to all of your submission, including illustrations – or have obtained permission from the copyright owner to publish the material. Where appropriate, the source of information should be cited. Ideally submissions should be sent by e-mail to [NRoots@NIFHS.org](mailto:NRoots@NIFHS.org) in Microsoft Word format (doc or docx or rtf) and preferably not pdf. Articles should not normally exceed 1,500 words, with each map, photograph or other illustration counting as 100 words; this should occupy no more than 4 pages. Articles will be re-formatted to accord with the house style.





## BIENNIAL COMPETITION

In alternate years the Belfast Branch organises a competition for all members of the Society. It takes the form of writing an article on some topic. Prizes are awarded and a selection of articles is published in the journal. Topics of previous competitions were:

*My Family History Research*  
*Memories*  
*My Eight Great Grandparents*  
*Life in my Townland through the Eyes of my Ancestors*  
*Occupations in my Family*  
*My Family Odyssey*  
*Scandal, Surprise, Shock*



The online shop has a variety of books, CDs and research booklets published by the Society and also a wide range of reprints of old Ordnance Survey maps.

## BOOKS & CDS

These are mainly collections of graveyard inscriptions published by Branches of the Society. There are also collections of announcements of births, marriages and deaths, a book of letters home from Ulster emigrants to New Zealand and a reprint of R. M. Sibbett's history of the manor of Cashel (the area around Portglenone, County Antrim), based on a Grand Jury Book dated 1769 to 1828.



## RESEARCH BOOKLETS

NIFHS publishes three series of useful A5 booklets called ***Researching Your Ancestors in the North of Ireland***. One series is of guides for beginners and others to understand and locate the main records of use to



genealogists: the titles are ***A Beginners' Guide***, ***A Research Guide***, ***Websites***, ***Locating Church Records*** and ***Census Records***.



Another series is of county guides with details of a very wide range of sources to take your research further: the counties covered so far are ***Cavan***, ***Monaghan***, ***Londonderry***, ***Tyrone*** and ***Fermanagh***. The first parish guide to be published is ***Lisburn - Parish of Blaris***.

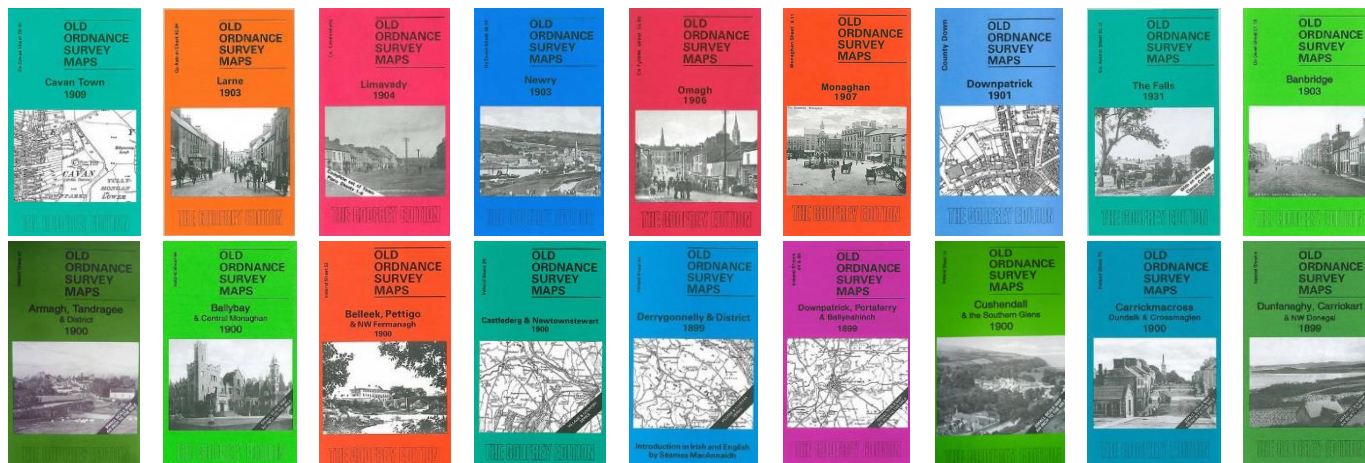


The latest series is of course guides; these are Course Notes for those attending courses or those who are unable to attend. So far, the following are available:

- ***From Family Tree to Family History*** - how to organise and write a history of your family and where to find stories and pictures to bring the people to life.
- ***Emigration to Australia & New Zealand*** - the earliest immigrants, convicts, free settlers and gold rushes; the colonies, states and territories and their records.
- ***Life in Ulster in the 1830s*** - most Ulster families can trace their ancestors this far but not much further; there is a wealth of information about this interesting era.
- ***Heraldry: Understanding Coats of Arms*** - heralds and the science and art of heraldry and the language of blazon for describing coats of arms.

## ALAN GODFREY MAPS

NIFHS recommends the use of these reprints of old maps showing Ulster towns and villages and countryside as they were about a century ago. ***Alan Godfrey Maps*** are reprints of Old Ordnance Survey Maps. They are based on either 25" (or 1:2,500) plans, reduced to 15" to the mile, or "Inch to the Mile" maps. As all these maps predate the Second World War, they show the configuration of streets before bomb damage, after which many streets in Belfast were lost. There are about 70 maps and each includes a history of the area, and some include extracts from contemporary directories.



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