



THE NORTH OF IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Who's Who Handbook 2020~2021

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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 M^cClelland (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 below; some are vacant. If you would like to help in any capacity please contact the Chairperson. Fuller descriptions of the rôles are being drafted for some of the posts.

PRESIDENT

Ann Robinson

President@NIFHS.org

The President has a strategic rôle to play in representing the vision and purpose of the organisation. The rôle of the President as figurehead of the Society is undefined and it is up to each holder of the post to bring to it his or her strengths. Given that the holder of this office has generally been active in the running of the Society for many years, these strengths include valuable experience and many contacts, both within the Society and outside in the genealogical fraternity.

VICE PRESIDENT

Michael M^cKeag

It is useful for the President to have an Officer or Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the President is doing.

CHAIRPERSON

Brian O'Hara

Chair@NIFHS.org

The Chairperson represents the Society, its vision and purpose, at external meetings and events and must be aware of current issues that might affect the organisation. The Chairperson takes overall responsibility for the smooth running of the Society; this entails oversight of the other Officers and Volunteer Assistants and Branches and stepping in to resolve problems that arise. The Chairperson chairs meetings of Council and ensures that all relevant matters are discussed and that effective decisions are made and carried out.

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Alison Tait

It is useful for the Chairperson to have an Officer or Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Chairperson is doing.

GENERAL SECRETARY

<Vacant>

Secretary@NIFHS.org

The rôle of the General Secretary is to support the Chair in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Society. This entails making arrangements for Council meetings, Annual General Meetings and other meetings and being aware of forthcoming events and items that require attention. While many secretarial tasks are devolved to the Membership Secretary and other Volunteer Assistants, the General Secretary is expected to field all other matters that arise such as general correspondence, responding to postal and e-mail enquiries and liaison with Branches and outside bodies including the Charity Commission, CIGO, FFHS and FULS.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Elizabeth Scott

It is useful for the General Secretary to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the General Secretary is doing.

MINUTES SECRETARY

Elizabeth Scott

Minutes@NIFHS.org

It is preferable to have a Volunteer Assistant to take minutes of meetings and thereby support the General Secretary.

ENQUIRIES ASSISTANT

Elizabeth Scott

nquire@NIFHS.org

A variety of queries arrive by e-mail and post and a Volunteer Assistant takes responsibility for responding to them. Often it will entail acknowledging receipt and forwarding the query to the person best able to address it.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Glenyss Glass

Membership@NIFHS.org

The Membership Secretary is responsible for maintaining records of the members and for liaising with the Branch Treasurers, who perform the membership enrolment for their Branches. The Membership Secretary sends Branches the necessary forms and instructions and receives from them the membership forms and capitation fees and passes the latter to the Society's Treasurer. The Membership Secretary also processes the Associate Members' membership forms and subscriptions and arranges for the latter to be banked. The Membership Secretary reports to Council meetings. Another responsibility is to collect profile forms that accompany membership forms or arrive separately and pass these to the Journal Editor for publication.

ASSISTANT MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

<Vacant>

It is useful for the Membership Secretary to have an Assistant Membership Secretary to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Membership Secretary is doing. Thus one might regularly process Branch Members' applications while the other processes those of Associate Members.

MEMBERSHIP ASSISTANT

Rosemary Sibbett

It is useful for the Membership Secretary to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Membership Secretary is doing. Thus one might regularly process Branch Members' applications while the other processes those of Associate Members.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS ASSISTANT

Glenyss Glass

MemInt@NIFHS.org

One task of the Membership Secretary is to respond to requests on this e-mail address to be put in contact with members who have listed their research interests.

MEMBERSHIP DESPATCH ASSISTANT

Glenyss Glass

When members join the Society they are sent a welcoming pack and when members renew they may need to be sent journals and this is the task of a Volunteer Assistant.

TREASURER

Michael M^cKeag

Treasurer@NIFHS.org

The rôle of the Treasurer is to maintain an overview of the organisation's financial affairs, ensuring its viability and ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained. The Treasurer is responsible for setting a budget and maintaining the Society's accounts, for reporting to Council meetings and for the presentation of the Consolidated Accounts for the Society's Annual General Meeting and for the Charity Commission. The Treasurer liaises with the Branch Treasurers, supplying the necessary forms and instructions and receiving their end of year accounts.

ASSISTANT TREASURER

<Vacant>

It is useful for the Treasurer to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Treasurer is doing.

BOOKKEEPER

Colin M^cBride

A Volunteer Assistant to assist the Treasurer by dotting the "i"s and crossing the "t"s is invaluable.

LIBRARIAN

Ann Robinson

Librarian@NIFHS.org

The Librarian is responsible for the material in the Society's Randal Gill Library, Irish Journal Room and Map Room and for miscellaneous collections of records. The Librarian is supported by Volunteer Assistants who maintain and index particular collections and provide a Look Up Service.

LOOK UP SERVICE ASSISTANT

Etta Mann

LookUp@NIFHS.org

A Volunteer Assistant is responsible for responding to the free Look Up Service provided to members.

ANCESTOR CHARTS ASSISTANT

Martin M^cDowell

A Volunteer Assistant maintains and indexes the Society's collection of Ancestor Charts submitted by members.

FAMILY TREES ASSISTANT

Elizabeth Scott

A Volunteer Assistant maintains and indexes the Society's collection of Family Trees.

MOURNING CARDS ASSISTANT

Sandra Ardis

A Volunteer Assistant maintains and indexes the Society's collection of Mourning Cards.

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Martin M^cDowell

Education@NIFHS.org

The Education & Development Officer's rôles include organising programmes of courses for members and the public and responding to requests by existing or potential Branches for help with their development.

EDUCATION ASSISTANT

<Vacant>

It is useful for the Education & Development Officer to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Education & Development Officer is doing.

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Sandra Ardis

Projects@NIFHS.org

The Project Co-ordinator maintains an oversight over all the various projects and ensures quality of standards and avoidance of duplication.

DEPUTY PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Imelda M^cVeigh

It is useful for the Project Co-ordinator to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Project Co-ordinator is doing. This Volunteer Assistant might take responsibility for a major group of projects, such as Transcriptions of Church and Graveyard records.

PUBLICITY OFFICER

Maeve Rogan

Publicity@NIFHS.org

The Publicity Officer is responsible for publicising the Society's activities through the press, the website and social media channels including Facebook and Twitter.

PUBLICITY ASSISTANT

<Vacant>

It is useful for the Publicity Officer to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Publicity Officer is doing.

VOLUNTEER ASSISTANTS

In addition to the Volunteer Assistants listed above, the following play a major part in the running of the Society.

WEBMASTER & WEB ASSISTANT

<Colin M^cBride>

Web@NIFHS.org

The Webmaster is of course in charge of the website - its technology and contents.

Ian Mack

This rôle is to assist the Webmaster with the changing contents of the website.

There is a Website Working Group investigating improvements, led by **Ken Tait** and consisting of **Sandra Ardis**, **Vincent Lavery**, **Arthur Macartney**, **Ian Mack**, **Michael Montgomery**, **Maeve Rogan** and **Joy Smith**.

JOURNAL EDITOR & EDITORIAL TEAM

Audrey M^cKeown

NRoots@NIFHS.org

The journal, *North Irish Roots*, is published twice a year, in spring and autumn, and copies are posted to all members. The Editorial Team consist of **Ian Forsythe**, **Diana Kirkpatrick** & **Michael M^cKeag**.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EDITORIAL TEAM

Evelyn Barrett

Newsletter@NIFHS.org

The newsletter, *NIFHS News*, is published at least twice a year and copies are emailed to all members. The Editorial Team consist of **Martin M^cDowell** and **Rosemary Sibbett**.

DATA PROTECTION OFFICER

Anne Johnston

The Data Protection Officer liaises with the Information Commissioner's Office to keep the Society's registration and our practices up to date.

SHOP MANAGER & SHOP ASSISTANT

Evelyn Barrett

Shop@NIFHS.org

The Society's online Shop at www.nifhs.org/shop/ sells a variety of publications and these are despatched by the Shop Manager, who also ensures that stock is reordered when necessary and liaises with the Society Treasurer to arrange payment.

<Vacant>

It is useful for the Shop Manager to have a Volunteer Assistant to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the Shop Manager is doing.

RESEARCH CENTRE ASSISTANT

<Vacant>

Bookings@NIFHS.org

The day to day management of the Research Centre, including dealing with bookings for the use of its rooms, is the responsibility of this Volunteer Assistant.

CIGO REPRESENTATIVE

Evelyn Barrett

The Council for Irish Genealogical Organisations is an umbrella organisation of which the Society is a member. Our representative attends its meetings to put our view and report back to our Council.

PRONI USER GROUP REPRESENTATIVE

Ann Robinson

The Public Record Office for Northern Ireland is an important archive for members of our Society. Our representative attends its meetings to put our view and report back to our Council.

DNA PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR & CO-ADMINISTRATORS

Martin M^cDowell

The Society's DNA Project, www.NIFHS.org/dna/, to make genealogical connections within and between families whose roots are in the North of Ireland, is administered by the DNA Project Administrator.

Anne Johnston

Vincent Lavery

Alan Rosborough

It is useful for the DNA Project Administrator to have Co-Administrators to deputise for him or her and who is sufficiently au fait with what the DNA Project Administrator is doing.

BRANCH OFFICERS

The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of each Branch represent their Branch on Council, putting their Branch's view and reporting back to their Branch and its Committee.

For other information about the Branches, including their programmes, see www.NIFHS.org/branches/.

BALLYMENA BRANCH

Founded in 1989, the Secretary's e-mail address is Ballymena@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
Brian O'Hara	Rosemary Boreland	Alan Rosborough

BELFAST BRANCH

Founded in 1983, the Secretary's e-mail address is Belfast@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
Michael Parkinson	Alan Hyndman	Margaret Armstrong

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS BRANCH

Founded in 1996 as the Coleraine Branch, the Secretary's e-mail address is Causeway@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
Séan Traynor	Elwyn Soutter	Andrew Kane

FOYLE BRANCH

Founded in 2009, the Secretary's e-mail address is Foyle@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
Gerard Harvey	Nuala M^cGee	Jim Condren

KILLYLEAGH BRANCH

Founded in 1982 as the Killyleagh & District Branch, the Secretary's e-mail address is Killyleagh@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
Nigel Carse	Ken Tait	<Vacant>

LARNE BRANCH

Founded in 1985, the Secretary's e-mail address is Larne@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson	Secretary	Treasurer
<Vacant>	Glenyss Glass	David Simms

LISBURN BRANCH

Founded in 1982, the Secretary's e-mail address is Lisburn@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson Louise Lewis	Secretary Elizabeth Scott	Treasurer Mary Glendinning
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NEWTOWNABBEY BRANCH

Founded in 1995, the Secretary's e-mail address is Newtownabbey@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson Etta Mann	Secretary Evelyn Barrett	Treasurer Siobhan Watson
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NORTH ARMAGH BRANCH

Founded in 2004 as the Portadown Branch, the Secretary's e-mail address is NorthArmagh@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson Joy Smith	Secretary Donna Fletcher	Treasurer Irene Gourley
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SOUTH TYRONE BRANCH

Founded in 2018, the Secretary's e-mail address is SouthTyrone@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson Angela O'Connor	Secretary Eileen Quinn	Treasurer Leslie Kelly
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TYRONE BRANCH

Founded in 1988 as the Omagh Branch, the Secretary's e-mail address is Tyrone@NIFHS.org and the statutory Branch Officers are:

Chairperson Vincent Brogan	Secretary Sheena M^cClure	Treasurer <Vacant>
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