

# Irish Labour History News

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The FREE Bi-Annual Newsletter of the Irish Labour History Society

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D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, Fionnuala Richardson, and Paul Ennis. (Photograph: Jack McGinley)

## CONFERENCE: LEAVING 1916 & ENTERING 1917

The 2016 annual conference of the ILHS took place at Beggars Bush on Saturday 22nd October. Entitled 'Leaving 1916 & Entering 1917', the event was opened by society president Jack McGinley and featured three panel sessions.

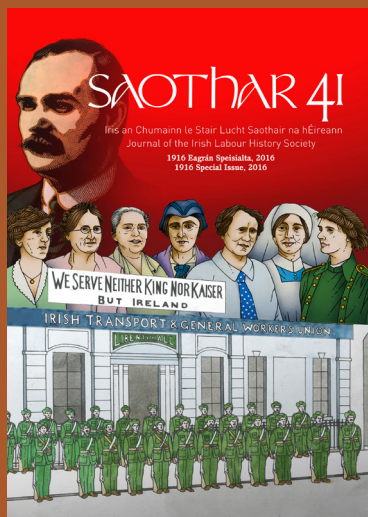
In the first session, Charles Callan discussed the life of trade union activist and 1916 casualty Peadar Macken, with Mick Halpenny then presenting on the Welsh internment camp of Frongoch after the Easter Rising. The second session saw *Saothar* co-editor Sarah-Anne Buckley discuss child welfare and childhood in 1917, before Paul Ennis and D. R. O'Connor Lysaght talked about the subjects of their recent ILHS booklets (*Peter Ennis: The man who kept Liberty Hall*, and *From the GPO to the Winter Palace: How a Workers' Revolution was Lost and How a Workers' Revolution was Won*).

In the final session, Padraig Yeates outlined the contents of the National Archives of Ireland's online archive of Irish Trade Union Congress & Labour Party annual reports from 1901-25, Donal Fallon discussed the life of trade unionist and Irish Volunteer Richard O'Carroll, and Joe Mooney of the East Wall History Group told the story of how men from his Dublin 3 community resisted the British Army in 1916.

A notable feature of the day was the positive reaction of speakers and audience members to the 1916 exhibition currently on display at Beggars Bush, which is open to members of the public during the society's office hours (Mon-Thurs 10-4, Fri 10-1).

The next ILHS Annual Conference will take place on Saturday 21st October 2017. The ILHS will mark the centenary of Bray & District Council of Trade Unions on 4th November 2017.

## SAOTHAR 41 STILL AVAILABLE



You can still purchase copies of *Saothar* 41 online at [www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com](http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com). The ILHS online shop also includes back issues of *Saothar* and other society publications.

# Recent Events of Labour History Interest in the North West



Above: Daisey Mules (INTO) launches Emmet O'Connor's latest book. Below: Helga Woggon after her lecture on the life of Winifred Carney. (Photographs: Eddie Soye)

Bottom: Derry Radical Book Fair.



A number of notable events of labour history interest took place in the north west recently, including book fairs, book launches and talks and lectures on various themes.

Helga Woggon, author of books on James Connolly and Winifred Carney, delivered a lecture on the latter at an event in Derry on Friday, 16th September 2016. The event was held at the Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin on Great James' Street, where the launch of Emmet O'Connor's latest installment of his labour history of the city was also held on the evening.

Winnie Carney played an important role during the events of Easter Week, 1916, and was a close confidant of Connolly's at that time. She entered the GPO armed with a typewriter and a revolver. She was given the rank of adjutant, despite her non-combatant status and remained with Connolly until the final retreat. Her political and activist career extended beyond nationalist activities. She was an active trade unionist and was a founder member of the Irish Women Workers' Union in 1912. She was also involved in the suffrage movement and was later active in Sinn Féin, the Labour Party and the Belfast Socialist Party.

The second volume of Emmet O'Connor's *Derry Labour in the Age of Agitation* was launched on the same evening. This installment of the local labour history traces the advent and impact of Larkin and Larkinism on the city's workers, and highlights the role of labour during a time of great upheaval in the city. The roles of James McCarron and Peadar O'Donnell - two pivotal, but very different figures in the city's history - are traced through the events of the 1910s and early 1920s. The book launch and Helga Woggon's talk were both hosted by the Derry Trades Union Council.

The inaugural Derry Radical Book

Fair was held on Saturday 28th January as part of the annual programme of events to mark Bloody Sunday. Stall holders and book buyers from across Derry, Donegal, Tyrone, and beyond attended the fair, which was held at the Pilot's Row Centre on Rossville Street. A spokesperson for the Radical Book-fair Collective stated:

"The day itself was a brilliant success judging by the numbers it attracted...There really was a fantastic mix of books and independent publications for every type of interest from books relating to political theories such as titles on socialism to republicanism, feminism to anarchism, queer or gender politics right through to a wide range of both local and national social and political history."

Talks were delivered by local authors Emmet O'Connor and Dave Duggan. The organisers hope to continue the event into the future.

Finally, the Charlie Donnelly Winter School was held in Dungannon over the weekend of 24-25 February. The events of the weekend were focused on and inspired by the life and works of the revolutionary socialist poet and Spanish Civil War veteran, who was born in Dungannon in 1914. An extensive programme of events saw contributions from historians and political activists from Ireland and Spain including Fearghal McCluskey, Brian Hanley, Manus O'Riordan, Bernadette McAliskey, Tommy McKearney, Declan Bree, and George Galloway, amongst many others.

*If you have news of labour history events in your area please get in touch with the society by emailing [secretary@irishlabourhistorysociety.com](mailto:secretary@irishlabourhistorysociety.com). The editors will endeavour to include news of upcoming events and reports of past events where space permits.*

# NEW LABOUR HISTORY BOOKLETS BY ILHS MAINSTAY CHARLES CALLAN

The ILHS Archives was happy to recently receive donated copies of privately published labour history booklets written by Charles Callan.

The first, printed in two batches in August and October 2014, marks the golden jubilee commemoration of the important 1964 building workers' strike. Written from the perspective of the Irish National Painters' and Decorators' Trade Union, it is based by the author 'on its records, (his) recollections as a participant, and some other contemporary sources'. In his foreword, Callan describes the success of the nine-week strike, which saw Irish workers receive various benefits in addition to the right to a forty-hour, five-day week, as 'arguably the most significant achievement of the Irish Trade Union Movement (not to say the Labour Movement) of the twentieth century'.

Callan's second booklet, *Labour in Kingstown 1890-1920*, was printed in September 2016, and at 86 pages in length is almost three times the size of the author's other volume. Containing a useful index and some eye-catching photographs and cartoons, the work features a series of essays by Callan on 'the general position of workers and their organisations in Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire) before labour entered electoral politics on an organised basis in 1920'.

As well as donating copies to the ILHS Archives, the author has privately circulated his two works to local libraries, as well as 'labour movement and fraternal organisations and interested individuals'. Callan is a former committee member (1977-79, 1983, 2001, 2008-09), Vice-President (1980), President (1981-2), Secretary (1987-2000) and Treasurer (2001-02) of the ILHS.

**Irish National Painters' & Decorators' Craft Group – SIPTU**  
**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
**40-Hour, 5-Day Week**  
**Building Workers' Strike**  
 18<sup>th</sup> August – 19<sup>th</sup> October 1964



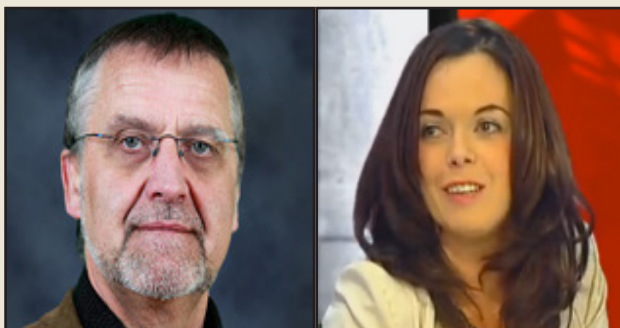
**Irish Congress of Trade Unions**  
**Construction Industry Committee**  
 Commemoration  
 Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014  
 Unite the Union, 55/56 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1

## Labour in Kingstown 1890-1920



Charles Callan

## SAOTHAR WELCOMES NEW EDITORS



Dr Martin Maguire (DKIT) and Dr Sarah Anne Buckley (NUIG) are the editors of *Saothar* 42

The Irish Labour History Society is pleased to announce that this year's issue of *Saothar*, its annual journal, will be co-edited by Dr Sarah-Anne Buckley of NUI Galway and Dr Martin Maguire of Dundalk Institute of Technology. *Saothar* 42 will be launched at the society's AGM on 8th April 2017, and will be available to collect from Beggars

conflict in Northern Ireland between 1969-72, Mary Jones' examination of labour and childhood in pre-Famine Ireland, Ruairi Gallagher's case study of inter-union rivalry in Watt's Distilleries Derry in 1920-21, Elaine Sugrue's analysis of gender and the Irish Drapers' Assistants' Union, and Kieran McNulty's piece on work-

Bush or posted to all current members of the society.

This year's issue contains the usual blend of articles, document studies, essays, correspondence and reviews. Articles include Brian Hanley's look at popular responses to Bloody Sunday and the

ing-class radicalism in Kerry during the era of the Irish Revolution. Also included in *Saothar* 42 is an essay by Emmet O'Connor on Ireland and the Russian Revolution, a biographical entry on Irish-Scottish labour organiser Edward McHugh by Andrew G. Newby, and a report by Francis Devine on the Military Archives of Ireland's 'Medal Series (1916-21)' currently being made available online via [www.militaryarchives.ie](http://www.militaryarchives.ie)

Back issues of *Saothar*, including last year's landmark *Saothar* 41 Easter Rising special co-edited by Sarah-Anne Buckley, Brian Hanley and Francis Devine, can be purchased at the Irish Labour History Society Archives in Beggars Bush, or online by clicking on the 'Publications' link on [www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com](http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com)

## Recent Labour History Events

The Irish Labour History Society was delighted to stage a Glasgow launch of *Saothar 41*, its bumper journal issue dedicated to the 1916 Easter Rising, at the Scottish Trades Union Congress headquarters of 333 Woodlands Road on Saturday 5th November 2016. Coming on the back of successful Dublin and Belfast launches of the journal, this saw ILHS President Jack McGinley and Francis Devine, one of its three guest editors, speak about the society and issue contents respectively. The event was organised by the 1916 Rising Centenary Committee – Scotland, with their secretary Stevie Coyle and chair Maggie Chetty joining the panel.

Many discounted copies of *Saothar 41* and other ILHS publications were purchased on the night, which also included a multimedia presentation about James Connolly and 1916 featuring songs, spoken word and images by Jimmy Ross and Finlay Allison. Additionally, there was the unveiling of a commemorative plaque to James Fearon (1874-1924), an unsung hero of the modern Irish and Scottish labour movements, by Phelim Jennings of SIPTU's Newry Branch and Jennifer McCarey of Glasgow Trades Council. This plaque unveiling was a joint initiative between the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, SIPTU and the STUC.

## GLASGOW LAUNCH OF SAOTHAR AND JAMES FEARON PLAQUE UNVEILING



Above: Jack McGinley, Maggie Chetty, Francis Devine, and Stevie Coyle  
(Photograph: Phelim Jennings)

President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina with members of the Galton Commemorative Committee (including, third from left, ILHS committee member John Feely) at the unveiling of the Jimmy Galton Monument in the Leitrim town of Efrinagh, near Carrick-on-Shannon, on Saturday 3rd September 2016. In a moving ceremony held at the site of Galton's 'Pearse Connolly Hall', made famous by Ken Loach's 2014 film *Jimmy's Hall*, President Higgins acknowledged 'the wrongful intimidation and ultimate deportation by an abuse of the law, of Jimmy Galton, to whose memory, and whose family, an apology is due'. The ILHS was among those to made a financial donation towards the building of the monument.

## UNVEILING OF GRALTON MONUMENT



### NOTICE TO MEMBERS AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

You can now buy or renew your ILHS membership for 2017 at [www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com](http://www.irishlabourhistorysociety.com)