

Irish Georgian Society

Annual Meeting 2025

5.30pm, Wednesday, 1st October 2025
City Assembly House, 58 South William Street, Dublin 2

MINUTES

1. INTRODUCTION FROM IGS PRESIDENT EMERITUS

Sir David Davies welcomed all to the City Assembly House for the Irish Georgian Society's Annual Meeting 2025. He noted that while his term of office finished at the end of December 2025, he had been asked to open proceedings in his capacity as President Emeritus of the Society, a role he noted that he was delighted to accept recently from the Irish Georgian Foundation. He made observations on projects the IGS had pursued during the year, notably exhibitions in the CAH, the Society's support of the Sirius Arts Centre, and a long-standing campaign to see the restoration of Kilmacurragh House, Co. Wicklow.

He noted his pleasure that Primrose Wilson, a former Vice President of the IGS, had joined the meeting and warmly welcomed Randal McDonnell, Earl of Antrim, who assumed the role of IGS Vice President.

Finally, he took great delight in advising the attendees that, after a thorough process undertaken by its Nominations Committee, the Irish Georgian Foundation has appointed Michael Wall as the new President of the Irish Georgian Society.

2. MINUTES OF 2025 ANNUAL MEETING FOR NOTING

It was noted that the minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting.

3. IGS PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

3.1 Introduction

Michael Wall thanked Sir David Davies for his kind introduction and noted the significant role Primrose Wilson had played with the Society over many years including serving as Chair of the IGS Grants Committee, as a member of the IGF board and of the Architectural Conservation & Planning Committee, as well as former Vice President.

He expressed his deep gratitude to all board members he had the pleasure in serving with over the previous nine years and also thanked Committee and staff members. He took the opportunity to introduce Jacqueline Hall as the Chair of the Irish Georgian Foundation and expressed his great confidence in her capacity to guide the Society's work over the coming years.

3.2 Overview of events

In considering the work of the IGS over the previous twelve months, he noted the following activities in Ireland, the US and in London:

- Ireland
 - Sirius Arts Centre and the Conservation Grants Programme
 - Patrick Earley Exhibition in the City Assembly House
 - The conference *DUBLIN 2025: a city in crisis ...or a golden opportunity?*
 - Traditional Building Skills Exhibition in Killarney
 - Membership events programme organised from Dublin and by the Chapters in Birr, Cork and Limerick
- US
 - Fundraising events in New York, Chicago, Boston, Florida and elsewhere
 - Trips to Ireland
- IGS London
 - 20 Ghost Club Tour and other trips
 - Christmas fundraising dinner

He observed that the Sirius Arts Centre project is making great strides with the programme of works during the year including the reinstatement of loggia doors, roof works to the east wing and painting the building's exterior.

On behalf of all in the IGS, he expressed his sadness at the recent loss of great friends and supporters of the Society including Elizabeth Dater Jennings, Rosie O'Neill and Maribeth Welsh.

3.3 Appointment of IGS Vice President

MW introduced attendees to the new IGS Vice President, Randal McDonnell, 10th Earl of Antrim advising that his appointment was overseen through the IGF Nominations Committee and the IGF Board. He provided a brief biographic background noting his role as Chairman of Sarrasin & Partners (London), his family home at Glenarm Castle, his role as Deputy Lieutenant for County Antrim, and his long-standing membership of the IGS. A warm round of applause greeted this announcement.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

MW introduced Charlie Sweeney, IGF Treasurer, and thanked him for the extraordinary work he has done for the Society over many years in this role.

Charlie Sweeney provided the following summary of the financial results of the Irish Georgian Foundation for 2024 and noted that copies of the full financial statements were available at the Annual Meeting for inspection by members.

- The income and expenditure account shows that the Society earned an operating surplus of €42,480 which was greater than expected due to receipt of a bequest of €39,176 from the late Richard Andersen.
- Letting the basement area contributed income of €77,500.
- Donations and the Heritage Council's Heritage Organisations Support Fund grant of €50,000 provided further revenue of €106,175.
- Despite a small increase in overhead costs, the net result for 2024 was favourable due to additional revenue from patron members' subscriptions, increased income tax refunds for donations, a surplus derived from the Edmund Corrigan publication in addition to the bequest referred to already.
- €6,306 of designated funds was used on maintenance costs of the CAH building and a matching amount was transferred from the general fund to the designated fund to restore it to €300,000.
- Adding the 2024 surplus to our general reserves brought this to €241,792 at the financial year's end.
- He noted that the Foundation has the benefit of cash reserves which will assist it in sustaining operations through adverse economic times. He added that fundraising efforts needed to continue, and the Foundation and Society are positive about its prospects for a better economic environment.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Michael Wall invited Donough Cahill, IGS Executive Director, to deliver a summary of the Society's activities over the previous year.

DC reported on the Society's four core programmes concerning planning and advocacy, conservation projects, scholarship, and education.

On planning matters, he highlighted the reopening of Castletown House, Co. Kildare, the inclusion of the Assembly Rooms, Belfast in the World Monuments Fund's Watch List, and the IGS conference *Dublin 2025: a city in crisis or a golden opportunity*.

He noted that the Society continued its great work in supporting scholarship through the publication of its annual journal, *Irish Architectural & Decorative Studies*, the success of the journal website (www.igsjournal.ie), and the presentation of bursaries through the Desmond Guinness Scholarship and the John Maiben Gilmartin Award. He also noted the exhibition of the Patrick Earley Collection of 18th and 19th century views of Dublin and Wicklow.

He provided an overview on the following grants that had been pledged by the IGS over the course of the preceding year:

IGS London		
St Nicolas Montessori School, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin	€2,000	Repair/replacement of 5 windows.
Turnings Gare Lodge, Co. Kildare	€5,000	Sash window reinstatement
St Munis Church, Ballymahon, Co. Longford	€5,000	€8,500 from BHIS
Sub-total	€12,000	
Homan Potterton Conservation Grants		
Shell house, Larchill Arcadian Gardens, Co. Meath	€1,500	General repairs
Tullynally Castle, Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath	€4,000	Restoration of East Greenhouse
Kilsharvan House, Bellewstown, Drogheda, Co Meath	€3,000	Window repairs
Sub-total	€8,500	
IGS Cork		
Whitfield Court, Kilmeaden Co. Waterford	€2,500	Repair & conservation of front door.
Tinnies, Valentia Islnd, Co. Kerry	€3,000	Repair of rare grass thatched roof
St George's Arts & Heritage Centre, Mithcelstown, Co. Cork	€2,500	Wainscoting repairs
Sub-total	€8,000	
Niall Smith Conservation Grants		
Killucan Market House, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath	€1,500	Conservation report
Clonalis House, Co. Roscommon	€5,000	Window repairs
Corny Grahams Post Office, Charleville, Co. Cork	€2,500	Reinstatement of limestone chimney.
Kildrought House, Celbridge, Co. Kildare	€1,500	Window repairs
Russborough House, Blessington. Co. Wicklow	€1,000	Repair of wrought iron gateway
ARDRAHAN COI	€2,000	Repair of rain water goods
Sub-total	€13,500	
Total	€42,000	

He noted the successful delivery of the following initiatives through the IGS Conservation Education Programme:

- Conserving Your Dublin Period House with Dublin City Council, spring 2025
- KINGDOM OF SKILLS 2025: Traditional Building Skills Demonstrations, Conservation Talks with Kerry County Council
- Water & Ireland's architectural heritage lecture series
- Daniel O'Connell 250: architecture, designed landscapes & visual culture

He summarised the compressive Events Programme that had been delivered and commended the Events Committee in organising a remarkable programme of activities that had included lectures, tours at home and abroad and parties.

6. AOB

In concluding the meeting, Michael Wall thanked all who attended and invited everyone to stay for a glass of wine and a chance to meet their fellow members.