

The Ballance House Anniversary Event, 4 September 2021

Prof Sinclair Stockman, NZ Honorary Consul to Northern Ireland

It is a privilege to welcome the Deputy NZ High Commissioner Shannon Austin to this very special event at The Ballance House.

Key goals of The Ballance House Trust have been to secure the history and legacy of John Ballance, and to provide learning and insight now and into the future.

It has been a pleasure to have spent time with the Ballance House team as the Honorary Consul for New Zealand in Northern Ireland, and to have witnessed their personal efforts to secure the legacy of The Ballance House and to provide learning and insight for the current and future generations.

When the decision was taken to enhance The Ballance House experience a few distant years back, little was it known that Covid would strike.

Many would have decided to stand down, waiting perhaps for better times. However the team here saw this as an opportunity to undergo significant improvements which would secure The Ballance House and its heritage for the future.

What we see today is the fruit of their determination and belief.

Their determination in some ways reflected the vision of John Ballance, where the importance was to secure a future for the next generations, rather than waiting for better times.

This also reflects on the Ulster determination to progress even when there are difficulties.

In essence the watchword was not to wait for others to take action, but to lead to create a better present and future.

As a Liberal, John Ballance would have believed that it is duty to encourage the nation to deliver both for the present and also for the future, which reflects the goals of these efforts.

Today marks the official opening of The Ballance House to visitors. Sincere congratulation to all who have supported and engaged with this transformation.

Personally it has been an honour to be part of The Ballance House team.