

PRESS RELEASES 2005

21 November 2005: A Gruesome Case – James Joyce’s Dublin Murder Trial

One of the highlights of the National Library Society’s Autumn/Winter programme will be a lecture given next week by Mr Justice Adrian Hardiman entitled *A Gruesome Case – James Joyce’s Dublin Murder Trial*.

In this lecture Mr Justice Hardiman will describe the background to a notorious murder trial which took place in Dublin in 1900, and he will explain why it held such fascination for James Joyce.

The lecture, which will take place on **Wednesday evening 23 November at 7pm** in the National Library’s new seminar room, will focus on the trial of Samuel Childs, a respectable Protestant accountant accused in 1900 of murdering his 77-year-old brother by battering him death.

When the case was heard in Green Street Criminal Court in Dublin in 1900 it caused a sensation. One of those present at the trial was the young James Joyce, who was then an undergraduate in the Jesuit university on St Stephen’s Green.

Joyce subsequently gave a detailed account of the trial to his friend and fellow student Eugene Sheehy. In 1953, His Honour Judge Sheehy, as he had become, recalled the story for Richard Ellman, Joyce’s major biographer.

The Childs’ case would now be obscure were it not for the recurring mentions of it in *Ulysses*. Joyce was fascinated with the Childs’ murder and other “gruesome cases” from a number of points of view: the way they were treated by the ‘yellow press’ of the day, the way the public perceived them, and the intellectual puzzle of the cases where guilt could not be quite proved, or innocence quite established.

Samuel Childs was acquitted of the murder of his brother despite the strong chain of circumstantial evidence presented during the trial. In his lecture, Mr Justice Hardiman will describe some of the reasons why the Crown case fell apart.

Admission to Mr Justice Hardiman’s lecture, which is on a first-come basis, is free of charge.

10 November 2005: The Irish Films in the Mitchell & Kenyon Collection: screening in the National Library of Ireland

Today, the National Library of Ireland, in association with the British Film Institute and the National Fairground Archive at the University of Sheffield, hosts a special screening of 26 films made in Ireland between 1901 and 1902. These were among 800 films discovered after 70 years in a building which was originally owned by the north of England-based company, Mitchell & Kenyon.

The screening – the first public viewing of these Irish films since the early 1900s – will be introduced jointly by Dr Vanessa Toulmin, Research Director of the National Fairground Archive, and Bob Monks, researcher on early Irish films and contributor of the chapter on Irish films in the book entitled *The Lost World of Mitchell & Kenyon – Edwardian Britain on Film*.

Mitchell & Kenyon ran a photographic business in Blackburn, Lancashire during the late-19th century. In 1897, when the British film industry was still in its infancy, the company's founders, Sagar Mitchell and James Kenyon diversified operations at their Blackburn, Lancashire base and began to produce short films – both fiction and non-fiction.

Between 1897 and 1913, they were commissioned by touring showmen to make non-fiction films about everyday life. Shot mainly in the north of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, they recorded factory gate exits, school exits, street processions, activities of personalities of the day. As purpose-built cinemas were not yet in existence, the films were advertised as 'local films for local people' and were screened at local fairs, village fetes and in town halls.

Between June 1901 and December 1902, three British companies filmed (or had filmed) more than 80 scenes in various locations around Ireland. Many of these films were developed by Mitchell & Kenyon, were subsequently lost. Those that survived, and were shown at the recent Library screening, included scenes of workers leaving factories (so-called "factory gate films"); congregations leaving churches in Dublin and Cork; soccer matches; athletic meetings; regattas; a horse tram ride through Belfast; an electric tram ride through Cork; the Dublin-Wexford train arriving in Wexford; a ride on the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway; market scenes in the Bull Ring, Wexford. Some of the most impressive scenes are of the grand parade for the

opening of the Cork International Exhibition, scenes of the actual exhibition area itself, and various scenes shot in and around Cork city.

The duration of most films was one minute.

In 1926 the Mitchell & Kenyon business ceased operations. For the next 70 years, 800 rolls of early nitrate film sat in sealed metal barrels hidden in the basement of a Blackburn shop. The discovery of the films in 1994 was largely due to the persistence of local historian Peter Worden who was convinced that they must be stored somewhere in the building. His conviction proved correct, and their existence was finally revealed during demolition works. On hearing news of their discovery, Peter Worden reacted immediately, managing to rescue the films from a skip before they suffered irretrievable damage.

Many present-day viewers are accustomed to old films being scratched and grainy; the contrast is too strong, they are projected too fast. The quality of the Mitchell & Kenyon films, on the other hand, is a revelation; they are characterised by high standards of cinematography and reproduction.

They have now been revealed to modern audiences in their original splendour, and look as good now as they did when first viewed more than one hundred years ago.

The National Library of Ireland would like to thank the British Film Institute for permission to reproduce these images.

28 October: John Banville to open *Library Late* series at the National Library of Ireland

Irish writer **John Banville**, winner of the Man Booker Award 2005, will be the first writer to feature in a new series of monthly public interviews at the National Library of Ireland, beginning next month **Tuesday 15th November at 8pm**. The series, entitled *Library Late*, will feature a host of critically acclaimed writers over the next year and is intended to stimulate a greater interest in, and understanding of, contemporary Irish and international writing.

Following John Banville, the winter season will also include writer **Edna O'Brien**

(December 12th, 2005) and **Patrick McCabe** (January 16th, 2006), with interviewers Fintan O'Toole of The Irish Times and Kay Sheehy of RTÉ. A complimentary wine and cheese reception follows each event with live music and lots of opportunities for socialising.

The Library has always had a unique place in Irish cultural life. More than just a library, it has variously been a place to write and research and a social hub for the great and the good of Irish letters including Joyce, Beckett, Shaw and others. This latest initiative in association by the National Library reinvents and revitalises that tradition.

Library Late, in association with The Merrion, Dublin and Sheridans Cheesemongers takes place each month from November 2005. Events are free to the public. Places are limited and must be booked in advance by telephone. To make a booking or for further information call 01 6030 244 or pick up at brochure at the National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.

18 October 2005 : Launch of exhibition *A Century of News Photography: to mark the centenary of the Irish Independent 1905-2005*

In November 2004, Independent Newspapers (Ireland) Limited donated its entire photographic collection, comprising more than 300,000 images to the National Library of Ireland.

An exhibition to mark the donation, and to celebrate the centenary of the *Irish Independent*, was opened today (18 October) at the National Photographic Archive by Sir Anthony O'Reilly, Chief Executive, Independent News & Media PLC.

Entitled **A Century of News Photography: to mark the centenary of the *Irish Independent 1905-2005***, it runs until February 2006.

Among the 106 images on display are a photograph of Harry Boland, Michael Collins and Eamon de Valera at the first meeting of Dáil Éireann (1919); the construction of the Shannon hydroelectric scheme (1928); Amelia Earhart sitting on her plane in Derry (1932); the North Strand, Dublin following the bombing by German planes

(1941); The Beatles at Dublin's Adelphi Cinema (1963); George Best and other Manchester United team members training at the Shamrock Rovers football ground in Milltown Dublin (1964); Charles Haughey tops the polls (1973); Seamus Heaney following his Nobel Prize win (1995).

The material, which is of immense historical value, provides an excellent record of almost every aspect of 20th century Irish life. As such it is an invaluable resource for researchers in Ireland and further afield. It has also helped to fill in gaps in the Library's existing collection of photographs – particularly in the areas of politics and sport in Ireland.

The collection, which contains glass plate negatives, plastic negatives and a small set of prints, is housed in the National Photographic Archive, Temple Bar, Dublin.

The exhibition features some of the highlights of the 300,000-item collection, and has been chosen to give a flavour of the incomparable photographic record created by the *Irish Independent* and its photographers over the past one hundred years.

Work on cataloguing the collection began earlier this year. Some material, including all images relating to 1916, the War of Independence and the Civil War, is available for viewing on the Library's online catalogue at www.nli.ie. Since it first became available on the Library's website in February of this year, it has consistently attracted a lot of interest from researchers and members of the public.

12 October 2005: New series of 16 free public lectures begins at National Library

A new series of 16 free public lectures linked to the *Certificate in Dublin Studies* offered by NUI Maynooth and Boston College's Centre for Irish Studies begins next week at the National Library's Seminar Room in Kildare Street, Dublin.

The lectures will offer a uniquely interdisciplinary view of Dublin city, bringing together distinguished scholars from many fields in a series of four modules that explore the answers to key questions:

- Where are we? The place
- Who are we? The people

- What do we do? Work, consumption, culture
- How do we look? The imagination

The first in the series of 16 lectures begins at 6.30pm on **Tuesday 18 October**. They will continue on Tuesday evenings until end March 2006.

Lecture topics range from Viking Dublin to the growth of suburbia, from Joyce's Dublin to the 'tiger' city, from Guinness's Brewery to the IFSC, from the city as depicted in film to a study of memorials to its citizens in Glasnevin.

Details of the series as follows:

Module 1: Where are we? The urban space of Dublin		
18 October	Planning Dublin	Brendan Bartley
25 October	Mapping Dublin	Dr Jacinta Prunty
1 November	Dublin: The Suburban City	Dr Mary Corcoran
8 November	Space and Violence in Dublin	Dr A Jamie Saris
Module 2: Who are we? The people of Dublin		
29 November	Viking Dublin	Mr John Bradley
6 December	Dublin's Slums	Dr Jacinta Prunty
13 December	Glasnevin: city of the dead	Dr Chiara Garattini
20 December	Travellers in Dublin	Dr Una Crowley
Module 3: What do we do? Work, consumption and culture		
24 January 2006	The Immigrant Economy	Dr Mark Maguire
31 January 2006	The City as a Border	Prof Lawrence Taylor
7 February 2006	Hi-tech Growth: the 'tiger' city	Prof Sean Ó Riain
14 February 2006	The Docklands and development	James Hogan
Module 4: How do we look? The imagined city		
7 March 2006	Joyce and Dublin	Dr Emer Nolan
14 March 2006	Tourism and the City	Dr Irene Furlong
21 March 2006	Photographing Dublin	Dr Kevin Honan
28 March 2006	TV, Cinema and the City	Dr Chris Morash

All lectures begin at **6.30pm** and take place on each of the above Tuesday evenings. Admission will be on a first-come basis.

14 September 2005: Inaugural lecture entitled *The Roman Triumph* will focus on the ancient Roman victory celebration or ‘triumph’, a ceremony imitated by military conquerors and triumphalist politicians ever since

The first in a series of annual public lectures in memory of the late Professor John J O’Meara of UCD takes place in the National Library Seminar Room this evening (Wednesday 14 September) at 7pm.

The inaugural lecture entitled *The Roman Triumph* will focus on the ancient Roman victory celebration or ‘triumph’, a ceremony imitated by military conquerors and triumphalist politicians ever since.

It will be given by Professor Mary Beard, Professor of Classics, University of Cambridge. Professor Beard is also Classics editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*; she is the author of several books on various aspects of Greek and Roman history, and she was co-curator of the recent exhibition ‘From Ancient Art to Post-Impressionism’ at the Royal Academy in London.

The Roman Triumph, the civil ceremony and religious rite of Ancient Rome was held to honour the military commander of a successful foreign war and to display the spoils of his victory. The general’s spoils and prisoners of war processed in front of him, his troops behind singing rude songs.

It was a ceremony that had roots in prehistory, and has been much imitated. (Napoleon made a particular impact with his procession and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris; on one occasion to celebrate American victory a triumphal procession marched down Madison Avenue in New York, under a cardboard and plaster triumphal arch; Saddam Hussein erected a huge triumphal arch to commemorate his various exploits).

The lecture will look at the Roman ceremony that lies behind these modern imitations. What happened at the Roman triumph? What was the ceremony for? This includes all kinds of puzzles: why, for example, was there a slave in the triumphal chariot whispering to the general “remember, you’re a man”.

John J O'Meara (1915-2003) was Professor of Latin at UCD from 1948 to 1984. Born in Co Galway, he joined the Society of Jesus in 1933 and, as a Jesuit scholastic, studied at UCD for his BA and MA in classics and at Oxford University for his PhD. He left the Jesuits in 1945, after doubts about his vocation.

During his career at UCD, Professor O'Meara was no stranger to controversy, opposing the old UCD establishment on a number of governance issues. He was also an early advocate of merging UCD and Trinity College – thereby incurring a rebuke from the then Archbishop of Armagh; he was vocal in criticising Government policy on reviving the Irish language and the emphasis on teaching Irish in the schools.

The annual lecture series has been made possible by an endowment from Professor O'Meara's family and is being given under the auspices of the National Library of Ireland Society.

12 September 2005: Lunchtime theatre at the National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street

In April of this year, the Dublin Lyric Players performed three plays by WB Yeats – *The Dreaming of the Bones*, *At the Hawk's Well*, and *Purgatory* – at the National Library's Seminar Room.

All three performances received critical acclaim. Based on this success, the Dublin Lyric Players have decided to perform two other Yeats' plays – *The Only Jealousy of Emer* and *The Death of Cuchulain*, the last play written by Yeats.

The performances will take place at lunchtime each day next week (from Monday 19 September to Friday 23 September inclusive) at the National Library's Seminar Room in Kildare Street, Dublin.

These plays are amongst Yeats's finest dramatic works. In *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, the beauty of the words and images shows Yeats at the peak of his poetic achievement, while *In The Death of Cuchulain*, against a backdrop of the dying

poet's final dramatic work and statement, Yeats introduces an irascible Prospero in the form of an old man, who sets out a concluding critique of Irish theatre in his time.

The productions will be directed by Conor O'Malley, who has previously directed a number of plays by Yeats, as well as other poetic dramas.

The Dublin Lyric Players derives its name from the Lyric Players Theatre in Belfast, whose foundation stone was laid by the poet Austin Clarke. During the first thirty years of their existence, the Belfast-based Lyric Players championed the cause of Yeats's plays, putting on many of his works including the ***Cuchulain Cycle***, which they performed at the official opening of the purpose-built Poets' Theatre in 1968.

Next week's performances will take place at 1.10 p.m. each day. Tickets will cost €6 and may be purchased at the door. For booking enquiries, telephone 01-603 0204

2 September 2005: Appointment of Chief Herald of Ireland and establishment of Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry

The Chairperson of the Board of the National Library of Ireland, Mr Gerard Danaher SC, is pleased to announce that under the power granted to the Board under section 13(2) of the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997, it has appointed **Mr Fergus Gillespie** as the member of the National Library's staff designated to perform the duty of researching, granting and confirming coats of arms using the appellation **Chief Herald of Ireland**.

Mr Danaher is pleased to announce also the establishment of the Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry as provided for in section 13(4)(a) of the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997.

The Committee will be chaired by Mr Patrick Clyne, a member of the Board of the National Library. Two other Board members have been appointed to serve on the Committee: they are Mr Brendan O Donoghue and Ms Máire MacConghail.

The Director of the National Library of Ireland Mr Aongus Ó hAonghusa and the Chief Herald, Mr Fergus Gillespie are *ex officio* members of the Committee. The Board

may in the future exercise the power given to it under section 13(4)(b) of the 1997 Act to appoint further members of the committee.

Mr Fergus Gillespie is Keeper in the National Library's Genealogical Office. He is a recognised expert on Irish heraldry. He is a native of Donegal and is a graduate of University College Dublin, from which he holds a Masters in Celtic Studies.

The functions of the Chief Herald of Ireland are to grant, confirm and register Coats of Arms and to maintain, preserve and make accessible the records which arise from and contribute to these functions.

The Office grants arms to individuals as well as corporate bodies and civic authorities.

22 June 2005: Launch of exhibition *Regeneration: The west of Ireland 1892-1914* in the National Photographic Archive

This year's summer exhibition at the National Photographic Archive, Temple Bar, will be of particular interest to researchers interested in the socio-economic history of the west of Ireland at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

The exhibition entitled ***Regeneration: The west of Ireland 1892-1914*** features photographs from the Congested Districts Board Collection and the Connemara Album and it records the difficulties facing economic development in Mayo, Galway and Donegal between 1906 and 1914, and in Connemara in 1892. As such, it provides a fascinating view of the west of Ireland one hundred, and more, years ago.

Regeneration: The west of Ireland 1892-1914 was officially opened by Professor Cormac Ó Gráda, School of Economics University College Dublin, who has published widely on Irish economic history in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The establishment of the **Congested Districts Board** marked an attempt by the government to regenerate localities through the promotion and development of agriculture and industry. A Congested District was defined as a poor, overpopulated and underdeveloped area, and where the rateable value was less than 30 shillings per head of population. Such districts were found in nine western counties, stretching from Donegal to Kerry.

In some ways the Congested Districts Board was ahead of its time in assisting the regeneration of regions that had poor agricultural land and very little industry to support the population. It improved the safety of some harbours, developed transport links, and created new industries in areas where there was little economic activity. In general, the Board was popular in areas where work was carried out.

The photographs in the National Photographic Archive collection feature the resettlement of tenants from Congested Districts; the building of new houses; changes in agricultural practices, and the development of the fishing industry in Galway, Mayo and Donegal.

Most of the photographs featured in the exhibition are by Robert Welch, a prominent Belfast-based photographer; a small number are the work of JD Cassidy, a photographer from Ardara, Co Donegal.

The other major body of work featured in the exhibition is **The Connemara Album**, which was acquired by the National Photographic Archive in January 2004. It features photographs of the people of Connemara in their daily activities – turf gathering, fishing, building a new pier, children at school, among other subjects.

The Connemara Album photographs were taken in 1892 by Major Rutledge Fair for James Hack Tuke in Connemara. Both men were deeply involved in trying to improve the lot of people living in the west of Ireland who were suffering from extreme poverty.

Regeneration: The west of Ireland 1892-1914 opens to the public tomorrow Thursday 23 June at the National Photographic Archive, Temple Bar, Dublin, and runs until 10 October 2005. Admission is free.

9 June 2005: Birthday Celebrations in Ireland for Hans Christian Andersen

Denmark's great writer, Hans Christian Andersen, will be celebrated in an exhibition at the National Library of Ireland from Friday next, June 10th, 2005. The exhibition forms part of the world-wide celebration of the writer's bicentenary.

Once Upon a Time – the Life & Work of Hans Christian Andersen (1805 -1875) tells the story of Andersen’s life in pictures and documents – including facsimiles of letters, portraits and personal belongings. It is presented in conjunction with a selection of items from the National Library’s own collections including a manuscript translation into Irish of Andersen’s tales and examples of illustrated editions of his work featuring Irish artists Harry Clarke and P.J. Lynch.

Andersen wrote a total of 175 fairy-tales and stories, 14 novels and short stories, about 50 dramatic works, a dozen travel accounts, about 800 poems and a host of biographical works, articles and humorous short pieces. And all of these were written in an idiom that was skilful, universal and yet simple.

This international touring exhibition, developed by the Odense City Museums, comes to Dublin for just six weeks. While in the National Library of Ireland, the exhibition will be supported with a programme of associated talks and events (see below). For further details on the National Library of Ireland and its exhibitions please see www.nli.ie

Children’s Programme

- 1. Story Hour, Saturdays 11am**
Suitable for Age 5+

Saturday, June 11th, 2005 at 11am

Story Hour with Patrick Ryan

Patrick Ryan is an internationally acclaimed storyteller and has toured regularly throughout Britain, Ireland, Europe and the United States. His recent work included the award winning Shakespeare’s Storybook as well as various storytelling projects for the Verbal Arts Centre, Derry and BBC Radio.

Saturday, June 18th, 2005 at 11am

Story Hour with Liz Weir

Liz Weir is a professional storyteller. Formerly Children’s Librarian for the City of Belfast, she now travels the world telling stories to adults and children. She is author of Boom Chicka Boom, a collection of stories for children, and a new story collection Here There and Everywhere by the O’Brien Press.

Saturday, June 25th, 2005 at 11am

Story Hour with Cathryn Brennan of RTÉ Drama Department followed by an audio link-up with Martin Waddell, Andersen Award Winner for Writing 2004.

Saturday, July 2nd, 2005

Story hour with Toby Kinsella

Toby Kinsella is a multicultural storyteller and musician and performs at many storytelling festivals, schools and libraries in Ireland and Canada. His schools workshops include “Bringing the World to the Classroom” and rhythmical storytelling.

Saturday, July 9th, 2005

Story Hour with Nuala Hayes

Nuala Hayes has appeared at many arts festival including Scéalta Shamhna, The North West Storytelling Festival, Cúirt And Samhlaíocht Chiarraí.

Saturday, July 16th, 2005

Story Hour with Niall de Búrca

Niall de Búrca is the director of Scéalta Shamhna and travels the world performing and holding storytelling workshops.

2. Hans Christian Andersen Creative Workshops

Saturdays at 2.30pm

Suitable for 8 – 10 year olds.

Places are limited

Advance booking is essential (telephone 01 603 0200)

Saturday, June 11th, 2005 at 2.30pm

To Hans Christian Andersen, paper represented the basis for his imaginative expression. Be inspired by his paper-cuts and drawings and create a colourful book-mark with artist Sherra Murphy.

Saturday, June 18th, 2005 at 2.30pm

Create and learn to tell your own stories, using tales from Andersen and folktales from around the world, in a workshop with storyteller Liz Weir.

Saturday, June 25th, 2005 at 2.30pm

In his fairytales, Hans Christian Andersen brought ordinary objects to life. In this puppet making workshop, Margot Jones who facilitates puppetry , drama and

'storymaking' workshops in both Irish and English languages, will help you to do just that!

Saturday, July 2nd, 2005 at 2.30pm

Take a close look at the illustrations of Hans Christian Andersen fairytales by Irish artist Harry Clarke and create your own illustrated fairytale with artist Sherra Murphy.

3. Public Talks

In a series of lunch-time talks, a number of special speakers will explore the enigmatic character of Hans Christian Andersen, offering valuable background and perspectives on Andersen's life and work.

Wednesday, June 29th, 2005 at 1pm

Professor Anne Marie Mai

Hans Christian Andersen: Fairytales Revisited

In her talk, Anne Marie Mai, Professor of Literature at Syddansk University, Odense, Denmark will introduce the character of Hans Christian Andersen exploring the way in which his stories have been revisited by contemporary Danish writers including Louis Jensen, Klaus Høeck, Peter Adolphsen and Harald Voetmann Christiansen.

Wednesday, July 6th, 2005 at 1pm

Kristian Jensen

Hans Christian Andersen: The Art of Being Excluded

Kristian Jensen is Head of Early Printed Collections at the British Library and co-curator of the Library's exhibition on Hans Christian Andersen. In his talk, Kristian will explore the favourite Romantic themes of rejection and exclusion in Andersen's work as a reflection of the writer's own life and his perception of himself as an outsider.

11 May 2005: National Library of Ireland achieves independent status – first meeting of the new Board takes place

The National Library of Ireland became an independent State body, responsible for its own affairs and directing its own destiny today (Wednesday 11 May).

The historic change in the Library's status was made possible by the National Cultural Institutions Act, which took effect last week.

The new Board met for the first time this afternoon.

Speaking after the Board meeting, the Chairman, Mr Gerard Danaher, SC said:

“The establishment of the National Library of Ireland as an independent corporation presents a great challenge to those of us honoured by being appointed to the first Board.

“Many of the tasks facing us such as the conservation, restoration, maintenance and enlargement of the Library material, and the establishment and the maintenance of a record of the library material in relation to Ireland, are not novel. Nor is the task of contributing to the provision of access by members of the public to material relating to other countries. What is new is the technological context in which these tasks can now be carried out.

“The central requirement of the new Board is that everything we do must be for the benefit of the public. The means available to us to serve the public today are vastly greater than at any previous stage in history. In recent times, the developments in computer science, the growth in computer literacy and the coming of age of the internet are more significant in enabling the dissemination of knowledge than even the invention of the printing press was in 1450.

“A largely forgotten British Liberal politician, Lord Samuel, once said that ‘a library is thought in cold storage’. The National Library has always striven to deliver to the public as much knowledge as possible from the material maintained in its storage. However, with the means available today to make the knowledge contained in any library more widely available and readily accessible than ever before, my personal view is that the ultimate success or failure of this Board will be judged to a significant degree by the extent to which we embrace and utilise the opportunities which modern technology now affords us. Knowledge must never be kept in the darkness of cold storage when the physical constraints on letting in the daylight no longer exist”, Mr Danaher concluded.

The members of the new Board are:

Gerard Danaher SC, Chair; Senior Counsel

Patrick F Clyne, judge

Bob Collins, former Director-General, RTÉ
Ida Delamer, former Trustee, National Library of Ireland; silver consultant
Breda Kelly, company director
Máire Mac Conghail, professional genealogist; member Irish Manuscripts Commission
Susan McGrath, civil servant
Niall McMonagle, teacher; broadcaster
Brendan O Donoghue, former Director, National Library of Ireland; former Secretary, Department of the Environment
Jim O'Shea, former Trustee, National Library of Ireland; former hotelier
Margaret Toomey, Executive Officer, National Library of Ireland
Noreen Whelan, teacher; former Trustee, National Library of Ireland

27 April 2005: Minister for Education and Science launches exciting new Internet-based resource pack to support the recently revamped Leaving Certificate History curriculum

At a reception held in the National Library of Ireland today (Wednesday 27 April 2005), the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, TD, launched Leaving Certificate Case Studies Online: a resource for teachers of Leaving Certificate History.

Produced jointly by the National Library of Ireland and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), this Internet-based resource is aimed at supporting the recently revamped Leaving Certificate History curriculum. In particular, the new format aims to help students develop their faculties of criticism, comprehension and objectivity by providing them with an opportunity for close work on primary source research material – doing so in a user-friendly and accessible way.

The new Internet-based resource, which can be accessed on www.nli.ie and www.scoilnet.ie/hist, provides a substantial and interesting selection of documents linked to six case studies (three each for the Early Modern Ireland and Modern Ireland syllabus options), each of which includes a general introduction to the topic in question, biographical notes, a glossary of key terms and a series of questions.

Minister Hanafin praised both the Library and the NCCA for their commitment to the project and for their overall support for initiatives in education. Speaking at the official launch ceremony, the Minister (who taught History and Irish at the Dominican College, Sion Hill, Co. Dublin before entering politics) said:

‘I find it fascinating to see how a topic such as the 1885-1886 elections, previously considered quite heavy-going by many students, has been brought to life through this documents-based online resource.

‘The National Library has a long history of producing resource packs in history. Since the 1970s, thanks to the tremendous work of people like Dr Noel Kissane, teachers and budding young historians have been provided with superb packs of documents and historical maps on topics as varied as Daniel O’Connell and James Joyce, the Great Famine and *Athbheocan na Gaeilge* – packs which continue to be reprinted on a regular basis to this day. In many respects, the move to a wholly electronic resource pack is the logical extension of what the Library has been doing for almost four decades”, said the Minister.

Leaving Certificate Case Studies Online – a resource for teachers of Leaving Certificate History is the result of the collaborative project between the National Library and the NCCA. A special one-year studentship post was established in the Library in 2003 to undertake the work involved. The recipient of the studentship was Dr Brian Kirby.

Under the guidance of a steering committee, (which comprised Dr Noel Kissane and Gerry Lyne, former and current Keepers of Manuscripts at the National Library; Dr Ciaran Brady of the Department of Modern History, Trinity College, and John Dredge of the NCCA), Dr Kirby spent the studentship year researching and selecting the materials for six case studies, in addition to composing questions, writing biographical notes and introductory notes.

Speaking at the launch, Aongus Ó hAonghusa, Director, National Library of Ireland, said:

‘We are delighted to have materials from the National Library’s collections used for this purpose. This kind of engagement with primary source material is at the core of what we do as a national cultural institution and brings the student, and indeed the general interest reader, beyond the dates-and-facts approach to history.

'Moreover, it can significantly alter one's perception of history – just think of the impact of the original source and the directness of the message it can convey; look at some of the primary source materials on display here this evening. Consider for example the very personal insight offered by the contemporary diary entry from Sir George Fottrell, dated 11 September 1885, referring to the arrival of the new Catholic Archbishop of Dublin; his support for Home Rule, and a meeting with Sir Charles Russell', Mr Ó hAonghusa concluded.

While the case studies' main focus is on the Leaving Certificate History curriculum, they will also be of interest to a wider audience, including researchers, amateur historians and all those interested in understanding our past.

20 January 2005: National Library of Ireland appoints new Director

The Council of Trustees of the National Library of Ireland is pleased to announce the appointment of Aongus Ó hAonghusa as Director. The Council of Trustees wishes Mr Ó hAonghusa well in his appointment coming as it does at a time of major change for the Library with the imminent establishment of a new board for the organisation replacing the present Council.

Mr Ó hAonghusa has been Acting Director of the Library since September 2003, following the retirement of Brendan O Donoghue who served as Director of the Library from 1997.

Mr Ó hAonghusa joined the National Library in 2000 from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, where he was an Assistant Principal. During his tenure there he held the post of Head of Internal Audit, and he was also involved in areas such as heritage policy and Gaeltacht/Irish language policy.

He also served as Private Secretary to a number of government ministers.

In his role as the Library's first Keeper – Administration, he had a range of responsibilities in the HR, finance and corporate support areas and had particular responsibility for the Library's ongoing building development programme.

As Acting Director he has overseen the creation of '**James Joyce and *Ulysses* at the National Library of Ireland**': this is one of the most comprehensive Joyce exhibitions mounted in the world and has attracted more than 25,000 visitors since it opened in June 2004.

He is aged 45 and is a native of Galway. He is a graduate of University College Galway, from which he holds a B.Sc. in Zoology, and he also holds a Masters in Public Administration from University College Dublin.

In his spare time he is an avid hill-walker and cyclist. He is married with two children.

4 January 2005: Another remarkable year for the National Library

2004 was another remarkable year for the National Library, and for scholars of Irish literature. Signal events included the opening of the Library's exhibition on the life and work of James Joyce – one of the most comprehensive Joyce exhibitions mounted in the world; the unveiling of a new exhibition facility and seminar room; the opening of a new café; the acquisition of several major photographic collections, literary archives, and manuscripts.

- The 'James Joyce and *Ulysses* at the National Library of Ireland' exhibition, which opened on 14 June 2004 and continues until Autumn 2005, has already attracted over 25,000 visitors. It has two main aims: to show Joyce's creative process, which by extension is the creative process of everyone, and to introduce and explain the significance of Joyce's masterpiece *Ulysses*. Visitors to the exhibition are able to see, for the first time, the newly discovered manuscripts, which were acquired by the National Library in 2000 and 2002, and which have generated much international interest. In addition, using state-of-the-art technology, visitors can get a 'virtual feel' of Joyce's works by 'turning' the pages of his manuscripts and witnessing the complex ways in which he wrote – and rewrote – *Ulysses* over many years and thousands of pages.

- In November, the Library's new exhibition space was an award winner in the 2004 Opus Architecture and Construction Awards while in December, the digital media company X Communications won an Institute of Creative Advertising and Design (ICAD) award for its design of the interactive presentations component of the exhibition.
- The Library published or co-published a number of Joyce-related books during 2004 including *Ulysses Unbound: A Companion to James Joyce's Ulysses* by Joyce scholar, Terence Killeen; *A Bloomsday Postcard* by Joyce aficionado, Niall Murphy; *Faithful Departed* by Kieran Hickey; *A Joycean Scrapbook* by Katherine McSharry and the first seven of a comprehensive series of scholarly pamphlets.
- In November, an exhibition to mark the centenary of the Abbey Theatre, and featuring materials from the National Library's Abbey Theatre Photographic Collection as well as materials from the Library's Prints and Drawings Department and Ephemera Department, opened at the National Photographic Archive, Temple Bar, for a three-month run.
- The Library's graphic collections were particularly enriched by a number of key donations including:
 - The donation of the Connemara Album, which is both an extremely beautiful item and a very important source for researchers interested in the socio-economic history of the west of Ireland at the end of the 19th century. The photographs were taken in 1892 by Major Rutledge Fair for James Hack Tuke in Connemara. Both men were deeply involved in trying to improve the lot of people living in the west of Ireland who were suffering from extreme poverty. The Album was donated by Jocelin Winthrop-Young.
 - The donation by the McWeeney family of 358 glass plate stereo pairs. These photographs of Dublin and family life were taken by Professor Edmund J McWeeney between 1909 and 1920.
 - The family of the prominent photographer Fergus Bourke (who died in October 2004) donated a large selection of his prints to the National

Photographic Archive. It is fitting that the work of such a skilled photographer should be represented in the national collection.

- In November, Independent Newspapers (Ireland) donated its entire photographic collection, comprising more than 300,000 images and covering an 84-year span, to the Library. The material is of immense historical value. As well as providing a record of all aspects of 20th century Irish life, it will help to fill in gaps in the National Library's existing collection of photographs of politics and sport in Ireland. An exhibition to mark the donation, and to celebrate the centenary of the Irish Independent, will be held in Autumn 2005 at the National Photographic Archive in Temple Bar.
- The National Library's printed books collections were particularly enriched by signal acquisitions including:
 - Several Joyce-related materials including a collection of the periodical *The Egoist*, which contains (in the issues from 2 February 1914 to 1 September 1915) the first publication of *A portrait of the artist as a young man*; *Two Worlds Monthly*, edited by Samuel Roth, containing a pirated publication of Joyce's *Ulysses*.
 - An item which will be of particular interest to local historians: *Report of Dr. Henry Davy ...on the state of labourers' dwellings in his district. South Dublin Union. Dublin: Printed by order of the Rural Sanitary Authority (of South Dublin Union), 1883. (A report on the state of the labourers' dwellings in the Rathfarnham Dispensary District.)*
 - A fine copy of a most unusual book: *Storia della pittura e la scultura. Da I tempi piu antichi. Tomo 1. The history of painting and sculpture, from the earliest accounts. Vol. 1. Calcutta: from the press of Joseph Cooper, 1788 (1789). This is a survey of Greek art by Thomas Hickey (1756-1816), educated at the Dublin Society Schools 1753-56. Tipped in is a long autograph letter dated August 1797, from Hickey to Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville. This lengthy letter outlines his career.*

- A total of 37 donations were made to the Library's Manuscripts Department in 2004, among which were the following:
 - The Mairín Cregan papers, which document the literary career of a writer of exceptional talent who enjoyed success in her lifetime but has been all but forgotten. Mairín Cregan was a writer of children's books, newspaper articles, radio scripts, and plays. Born in 1891 in Killorglin, Co Kerry, she became involved in politics, was a member of Cumann na mBan and received a medal for her part in the War of Independence. Her best known-book, *Old John*, first published in New York in 1936, was extremely successful and was translated into several languages. Her other children's books were also bestsellers and were serialised on radio, in Ireland, on the BBC, and in Canada and Sweden.
 - The Bruce Arnold Papers: Original manuscripts of several of his books, including *Margaret Thatcher; a study in Power*. This donation follows previous donations by author.
 - The Miriam Gallagher collection including plays, scripts, short stories and a novel, as well as essays, lectures and ephemera. Among the works included are *Girls in Silk Kimonos*, *Song for Salamander*, *Shyllag*, *Carolan's Cap*. This collection is an addition to a previous donation made by the author in 1990.
 - The archive of the "Trees for Ireland Society" for the period 1950-2003.
 - The diary of John Kenny, an emigrant, probably from County Kilkenny. He emigrated to Quebec in 1846 and later settled in Utica, New York, where he worked as a shoemaker. The diary is an account of his voyage from Dublin to Canada.
 - "Mrs McHugh's Memoirs". Memoirs of a childhood in Ballyshannon, Co Donegal, by Mrs Muriel McHugh (née Patchell). While the memoir is undated it appears to refer to the period 1910-1925.

- Among the purchases by the Library's Manuscripts Department in 2004 were the Eric Lambert Papers, a patent issued to James Watt in Dublin, a letter written by William Rowan Hamilton, and a postcard written by James Joyce to Francis Sheehy Skeffington two days before he met Nora Barnacle for the first time.
 - Other literary acquisitions include items by WB Yeats, George Moore, Thomas Moore, Brendan Behan, William Makepeace Thackeray, James Stephens, Labhrás Mac Brádaigh, and Sean O'Casey.
 - Other manuscripts of importance to historians included correspondence of Lady Pamela Campbell, Roger Casement and Charles Stewart Parnell.