

MEDIA RELEASE

Were you there when JFK was over here? Call for members of the public to bring their memorabilia to National Library of Ireland collecting day on Thursday 30 May

13 May 2013: The National Library of Ireland (NLI) has partnered with the US Embassy, the National Archives and the JFK Presidential Library and Museum in Boston to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1963 visit of President John F Kennedy to Ireland, as part of a larger programme of events remembering this historic occasion.

The US Embassy has commissioned an interactive website and app to celebrate the anniversary, which will be launched on **29 May.** Members of the public will be invited to share their stories and memories of the JFK visit through the website. This online experience is linked with a multimedia exhibition, **JFK: Homecoming**, which will be opening at the National Library on **21 June**.

For anyone who would like a helping hand in getting their personal memorabilia online, the National Library of Ireland will be holding a collecting day on **Thursday 30 May.** Members of the public can bring along personal items associated with the JFK visit, such as photographs, sketches, audio recordings, films, diaries, letters and postcards, and share memories of the trip – first-hand or as remembered by relatives. Members of the NLI team will record people's stories, digitise the items, and add a selection of material to the website. Visitors will then be able to bring their precious items home with them.

The NLI will also be working with History PIN to host all the stories online. Historypin (www.historypin.com) is a way for millions of people from different generations, cultures and places to share small glimpses of the past and to work towards adding to the story of human history.

Places on the collecting day must be booked in advance. Members of the public who are interested in sharing their 1963 JFK visit-related story should email learning@nli.ie to book.

Note to editors: For four days in 1963 – from 26 to 29 June – Ireland buzzed with excitement while US President John F Kennedy visited Ireland. In Dublin alone, half of the city's entire population thronged the city centre in an attempt to catch a glimpse of the American president. Elsewhere, 100,000 people travelled to see him in the cities of Cork and Galway, while in Wexford, the town's 12,000-strong population swelled to 30,000 on 27 June, the day he visit to the Kennedy family's ancestral home in Dunganstown.

The NLI exhibition will run at No 2 Kildare Street from 21 June to 15 August.

Ends

For further information, contact Brenda O'Hanlon, O'Hanlon Media, on 087 258 3292