

MEDIA RELEASE

Caroline Kennedy and her daughter Tatiana open National Library of Ireland *JFK Homecoming* exhibition to mark 50th anniversary of President John F Kennedy's visit to Ireland.

Minister Jimmy Deenihan announces US student scholarships in honour of JFK

20 June 2013: Caroline Kennedy, only surviving daughter of US President John F Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy, together with her daughter Tatiana, and accompanied by Jimmy Deenihan, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, today launched ***JFK Homecoming***. This multimedia exhibition at the National Library of Ireland (NLI) marks the 50th anniversary of JFK's Irish visit from 26 to 29 June 1963.

Ms Kennedy was accompanied by her husband Edwin Schlossberg and their children, Rose, Tatiana and Jack, as well as many other Kennedy family members. Guests were welcomed by a rendition of 'The Boys of Wexford' by Frankie Gavin of De Danann, whose family played for JFK in Galway in 1963.

Speaking at the launch, Mr Jimmy Deenihan, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht said: "President Kennedy was a visionary in many areas, including when it came to the arts. His love of the arts shone in his presidency. It is therefore with immense pleasure, on the occasion of this exhibition and in the presence of our honoured guest Caroline, that I wish to inaugurate the *John F Kennedy National Library of Ireland Poetry Scholarship*. Under this scheme, scholarships in poetry will be awarded to young students each year. With the comments that John F Kennedy made about poetry and the arts during his time as President, I can think of no better way to mark this important occasion than through this scholarship programme."

The Director of the National Library of Ireland (NLI), Fiona Ross, said that the NLI is delighted to have partnered with the US Embassy in Ireland, the National Archives and the JFK Presidential Library and Museum in Boston on the exhibition.

"We very grateful to our parent Department for the funding it has provided for the poetry scholarships in honour of the Kennedy family. This will enable interns to work on the rich collections of poetry at the NLI while also engaging with POETRY ALOUD, the all-Ireland verse-speaking competition for schools organised by the NLI and Poetry Ireland every year", Ms Ross added.

JFK Homecoming focuses on the four special days in June 1963, when John F Kennedy came "home" to Ireland, and said that *"this is not the land of my birth, but it is the land for which I hold the greatest affection."* The exhibition tells the story through iconic photographs, original colour footage and documents in President Kennedy's own handwriting, and brings to life the extraordinary, charismatic speeches of the visit.

Video clips of well-known figures talking about their memories of the visit and analysing its significance feature throughout. They include Professor Diarmaid Ferriter, author

Colm Tóibín; former government minister Nora Owen; writer and communications consultant Terry Prone, and Colonel Bill Nott, one of the Irish cadets who was present at JFK's funeral in Arlington.

Alongside the exhibition, the US Embassy has commissioned an interactive website, www.jfkhomecoming.com where people can explore the visit in detail, and upload their own stories and memories. An exhibition app, which can be downloaded to smartphones using the exhibition WiFi, is also available

Throughout July, the NLI will play host to a wide programme of free events remembering President Kennedy's historic visit. These include an RTÉ Archive panel discussion chaired by RTÉ broadcaster Ryan Tubridy; a talk on JFK and the arts by filmmaker Alan Gilson; a lecture on the Irish roots of Jackie Kennedy by genealogist Jim O'Callaghan; and a programme for families and children reflecting the highlights of JFK's presidency.

The NLI exhibition will run at No 2 Kildare Street from 20 June to 13 August.

Ends

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

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, Limerick 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.

One of the most significant moments of the trip was President Kennedy's visit to Arbour Hill Cemetery, where he laid a wreath at the graves of the executed leaders of the 1916 Rising. He was the first foreign head of state to honour the executed leaders in this way. During the ceremony, Irish Army cadets performed the ceremonial Queen Anne drill, which is used at funerals and remembrance services to honour the dead. Later, President Kennedy said: "For me the highlight was the ceremony at Arbour Hill...those cadets were terrific. I wish we had a film of that drill so that we could do something like it at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier." Five months later, on 25 November, members of the 37th Cadet Class performed the drill in Arlington Ceremony on the occasion of President Kennedy's funeral.

JFK Exhibition Events Schedule

| Date | Time | Event title | Speaker | Booking | Notes |
|---------------------------------|--------|---|---|---------|---|
| Wednesday 19 June | 1pm | At the Height of His Presidency: John F. Kennedy - June 1963" | Tom Putnam, Director of JFK Library | No | |
| Tuesday 2 nd July | 7pm | Myth and Mystery: JFK and the Irish Imagination | Alan Gilsean | No | <i>Alan Gilsean reflects on the iconic presence of John F. Kennedy on the Irish cultural landscape</i> |
| Mondays 8, 15, 29 July | 1.10pm | Poetry Reading - A reading from 'Poems to Learn by Heart' by Caroline Kennedy | Mark Granier was born in London in 1957 but came to Dublin in 1961 and has lived here since. His has published two collections with Salmon Poetry, Airborne (2001) and The Sky Road (2007). His third collection ' Fade Street, was published by Salt in 2010. Prizes and awards include the Vincent Buckley Poetry Prize in 2004, two Arts Council | No | In this diverse collection, Caroline Kennedy has chosen poems that speak to all of us: Poems of deep emotions as well as ordinary experiences, and poems that cover a range of human experiences and imagination. Including sections on nature, friendship and family, fun and sport, there are poems to appeal to everyone. Join us in the space of the JFK: Homecoming exhibition and hear Mark Granier read poems from this collection. |

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| | | | Bursaries and a Patrick and Katherine Kavanagh Fellowship in 2011. Mark has had his work broadcast and read regularly for Lyric FM. He currently teaches Creative Writing for UCD's Adult Education programme. | | |
| Tuesday 9 July | 6pm | President Kennedy in Ireland: RTÉ's role in this historic visit -An RTÉ Archives discussion | Ryan Tubridy and a panel of guests | Booking required Book at learning@nli.ie or call us on 01 603 0240 to reserve a place. | <p>Note early start time</p> <p>Hosted by Ryan Tubridy, broadcaster and author of <i>JFK in Ireland : Four Days that changed a President</i>, The discussion will include Brid Dooley, Head of RTÉ's Archives, Liam Wylie, Curator of RTÉ's JFK exhibition, and Godfrey Graham, renowned RTÉ cameraman, integral to covering the 35th President of the United States visit to his ancestral homeland.</p> <p>The evening will reflect on the four days that</p> |

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| | | | | | propelled Ireland into the international media spotlight; why JFK's visit was a milestone in Irish history; the palpable charisma of the man as retold by a key cameraman of the time; how RTÉ managed this huge media undertaking including new insights from BBC documents just recently acquired. The talk will be illustrated by film and audio from RTÉ's Archives who have launched an online exhibition on JFK's visit to these shores www.rte.ie/archives |
| <p>Children's Event</p> <p>Wednesday 10th July</p> | 2.30 pm | Rapid Rockets and Wicked Robots | | <p>Booking required Book at learning@nli.ie or tel 01 603 0240</p> | <p>Going to the moon was a priority for the JFK Presidency. In this workshop you will look at a selection of space vehicles such as Sputnik, Apollo, Mars Rovers, Hubble, Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, and the Space Shuttle. We choose the space vehicle we want to draw then we produce lovely drawings on black paper with soft pastels in vivid colours. Age Group: 7-12 Duration 1 hour Deirdre Kelleghan The American Association for the</p> |

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| | | | | | Advancement of Science SPORE Award winner 2011 Informal Educator Discover Science and Engineering Science Ambassador 2012 Vice Chair IFAS Artist Amateur Astronomer |
| Wednesday 17 July | 7pm | "JFK and One Giant Leap for Mankind' | Panel discussion on the space exploration programme as part of the Kennedy legacy with Rick O'Shea as moderator. | No | In association with the Festival of Curiosity |
| Thursday, 18 July | 1pm | The Irish roots of Jackie Kennedy | Jim O'Callaghan, Genealogist | No | As per genealogy talk series |
| Mon 22 July | 1.05pm | Poetry Ireland in association with National Library of Ireland and Curlew Theatre Company presents <i>Emigration Road</i> a 'Play for Voices' | Emigration Road is one of five " <i>Plays for Voices</i> " devised written and directed by Eamon Grennan from New York and performed by Curlew Theatre Company from Galway | No | Acknowledge Poetry Ireland support – use logo. Emigration Road , explores a number of the iconic elements in the great wave of emigration from Ireland to the United States such as ' <i>The American Wake</i> ' ' <i>The Voyage Across the Atlantic</i> ' ' <i>The Arrival in America</i> ' ' <i>The Homesickness</i> ' as well as looking forward to its presence as an aspect of |

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| | | | | | contemporary Irish life. Followed by audience discussion with the performers about the piece and feelings and memories of emigration |
| Children's Event Wednesday, 24 July | 11.30am – 1pm | Children's Coat of Arms workshop | | Booking required Book at learning@nli.ie or tel 01 603 0240 | Learn about the ancient art of heraldry and look at the ways coats of arms are used today and then design your own imagined coat of arms at this fun workshop! The workshop is suitable for children aged 7 – 13 |
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