

Summer's wreath 2010

A celebration of
William Butler Yeats



William Butler Yeats was born in June 1865 into one of Ireland's great artistic families. This year, his creativity and legacy is again celebrated in Summer's Wreath, a month-long public programme of events run in conjunction with the Library's current exhibition ***Yeats: the life and works of William Butler Yeats***. The programme will feature lunchtime readings and reflections on his life and his poetry, evening lectures, recitals and music by leading names as well as a one-day course on Yeats' poetry.

The evening series of events began on Wednesday 2 June when award-winning actress and director Anjelica Huston discussed her life-long love affair with Yeats' poetry with broadcaster John Kelly. It will be followed on Tuesday 15 June by 'From Ballads to Byzantium', readings and recitals by the author and Abbot of Glenstal Abbey Mark Patrick Hederman and internationally acclaimed spiritual singer Nóirín Ní Ríain. On Monday 21 June, Cerys Matthews, former lead singer with the Welsh rock band Catatonia, will reflect on her love for the magic found in Celtic poetry and song, including the poetry of WB Yeats. On Wednesday 23 June, Professor Germaine Greer will give a lecture entitled *Yeats and Women: Desire and Dread*. On Monday 28 June, jazz vocalist Christine Tobin will give a performance featuring the poetry of Yeats set to music. In the last of the six evening events, which takes place on Wednesday 30 June, vocalist, artist and composer Gavin Friday will join musicians Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill in a concert tribute to Yeats.

The series of nine lunchtime events begins on Friday 4 June, when actor David Kelly gives a reading of Yeats poems. Subsequent events will feature readings by writers Polly Devlin, Mary O'Donnell, Brian Keenan and Declan Lynch; politician Mary O'Rourke; writer and critic Brian Fallon; broadcaster Eileen Dunne and illustrator Annie West.

On Monday 14 June, the Library will host a one-day immersion course entitled *Yeats and the Poetry of Love*. Designed for the interested amateur and lovers of poetry and literature in general, it will be given by Gerard Dineen, who has been teaching courses on WB Yeats in the Library for a number of years.

The final element in the programme is a special one-off screening of Professor Helen Vendler's lecture on Yeats's 'Vacillation', which was originally delivered as part of a master class at Harvard University Humanities Center in October 2008. It takes place on Wednesday 9 June at 6pm.

All Summer's Wreath events are free, although some require booking. More detailed information may be found in the current events section on the Library's website www.nli.ie.

National Library Events

Library Late

The Spring/Summer programme of 'Library Late' events explored the art of writing for both stage and screen. In this series, which ran until 26 May, some of Ireland's leading writers discussed their craft and also discussed the differences and similarities between writing for stage and screen.

At the 24 March event, Sophie Gorman, Arts Editor, *Irish Independent*, interviewed award-winning film and television writer Mark O'Halloran, whose screenplays include *Adam & Paul*, *Garage*, and *Prosperity*. He is photographed below with interviewer Sophie Gorman (left) and Fiona Ross, Director, National Library of Ireland.



Paul Mercier is artistic director and co-founder of the Passion Machine Theatre Company for which he has written and directed twelve plays. He has also written two plays for the Abbey Theatre; has written and directed a number of films, including *Studs*, and is the director and script editor of the TG4 drama series *Aifric*. He was interviewed by TV and radio broadcaster John Kelly at the 26 April 'Library Late' event.



Paul Mercier (left) is photographed here with Fiona Ross and John Kelly.



On 26 May, the featured guest was the award-winning playwright and film writer, Mark O'Rowe, whose screenplays include *Intermission*, *Boy A* and *Perrier's Bounty*. He is photographed above with interviewer Sophie Gorman and Katherine McSharry, Keeper, National Library of Ireland, in the Main Hall on the evening of the event.

Summer's Wreath

Summer's Wreath, the Library's annual celebration of William Butler Yeats' June birthday, began in style on Wednesday 2 June when Hollywood star Anjelica Huston took part in a public interview about her life-long love affair with Yeats' poetry. She is photographed here with Ms Mary Hanafin, TD, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport and Fiona Ross, Director, National Library of Ireland.



Presentation of Professor FX Martin papers

Personal papers of the late Rev Professor FX Martin, historian, leader of the 'Save Wood Quay' campaign, member of the Augustinian Order in Ireland and one of the most prominent figures in Irish academic and cultural life from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, were donated to the Library by the Augustinian Order in Ireland at a reception held on 1 June. Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and former legal advisor to Rev Professor FX Martin's 1970s 'Save Wood Quay' campaign, officiated at the handing over of the archive and launched the exhibition *Remembering FX Martin* which displays selected contemporary documents and other items related to the 'Save Wood Quay' campaign. The pages overleaf feature a detailed article on the archive and the exhibition.



Mary Robinson is photographed here with Fr Gerry Horan, Provincial of the Augustinian Order in Ireland and Fiona Ross, Director, National Library of Ireland.

DISCOVER YOUR NATIONAL LIBRARY: EXPLORE, REFLECT, CONNECT

The Library's exhibition, *Discover Your National Library: Explore, Reflect, Connect* opened in January 2010. The exhibition provides a unique opportunity to view a representative selection of the Library's holdings – the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of Irish documentary material, numbering eight million items, including maps, prints, drawings, manuscripts, photographs, books, music, newspapers and periodicals.

The exhibition has transformed how the Library's collections are accessed, and it has been welcomed by national and international media and blog reviewers. *Discover* featured in the Dublin St Patrick's Festival Treasure Hunt and as a case study for the *Smart Economy in Action: Ireland in Transformation* conference, organised by Microsoft Ireland in April.

The documents on display in the *Discover* exhibition cases are changed regularly. Among the originals currently displayed is a 1602 map by the military cartographer Richard Bartlett documenting the conquest of Ulster; a 1797 etching by James Gillray caricaturing the destruction of the French Armada in a storm in Bantry Bay a month earlier, on 23 December 1796; an 1841 poster in the form of a word puzzle for Daniel O'Connell's Repeal Association; examples of glass lantern slides from the Mason collection from the late 19th and early 20th century; the 1914 telegram from Roger Casement to John Redmond at the House of Commons in London urging support for the Irish Volunteers; and Ben Bay's character portrait of Elizabeth Young in the lead role of Deirdre in George Russell's Abbey Theatre play in 1902.

Within the main exhibition, there are also revolving temporary exhibitions, the next one relating to the life and work of the novelist, playwright and political activist, Alice Milligan (1866-1953); this has been guest curated by Dr Catherine Morris of the Global Irish Institute at University College Dublin. Alice Milligan was born into an Ulster unionist family in Co Tyrone, where she later returned to live with her family until her death. She became a nationalist activist in 1891. Eleven of her plays were staged by the Irish Literary Theatre, Inghinidhe na hÉireann, and the Gaelic League. She was a founding member of the Anti-Partition League in the 1930s.

Throughout, *Discover* makes extensive use of digital media, and the exhibition is viewable through the Library's web pages. Special features in the exhibition include a series of screened curator's choice talks, where the Library's conservators and collections staff talk about their favourite Library items, perhaps sharing little-known aspects about those items, such as their acquisition and their conservation. Each display area also has a touchscreen, where visitors can examine the objects on display in the cases in more detail and see a sample of other related items from the Library's collections.

Among the most popular features of the *Discover* exhibition are the interactive tables using prototype Microsoft Silverlight technology, which enable visitors to scroll through a databank of newly digitised albums, volumes, and single-sheet items and then zoom in on objects of particular interest from the collections. Images are tagged in such a way that if visitors find an item of particular interest, the technology automatically links them to other items likely to be of interest. If the visitor's home PC or laptop is touchscreen-enabled, they can enjoy the same interactive experience as that experienced by visitors at the Library. Those whose computers don't have touchscreen capability can still view the images in detail online at www.nli.ie/discover by using a mouse scroll wheel.

An active outreach programme of lectures, workshops and discussion groups around the exhibition continues throughout the summer.

New content will be featured in *Discover Your National Library: Explore, Reflect, Connect* at 2-3 Kildare Street, Dublin from late Summer 2010.

1. Irish Heart Foundation poster, designed by Pete Sluis, 1970s, from the Library's Ephemera collection.
2. International Match Programme for the 1936 Ireland v Germany soccer match published by the Football Association of the Irish Free State. Ireland defeated Germany 5-2 in front of 28,000 spectators at the match that took place in Dalymount Park, Dublin. This item is also drawn from the Library's Ephemera collection.
3. Repeal Association poster circa 1841 illustrated with image of 'the Liberator', Daniel O'Connell, from the Library's collection of political ephemera.
4. Ben Bay's character portrait of Elizabeth Young in the lead role of Deirdre in 'AE' (George Russell's) Abbey Theatre play circa 1916, from the Library's Prints and Drawings collection.
5. Postcard advertising Cluithcheoiri na hÉireann's staging of Alice Milligan's *The Last Feast of the Fianna* at the Rotunda Theatre, Dublin, 1907, from the Library's Prints and Drawings collection.
6. Extract from Alice Milligan's diary, 7 May 1891: 'Michael Davitt laden with parcels'.



5.

6.



Poster for the 1979 Wood Quay protest march with cartoon by Martyn Turner.



Excavations at Wood Quay, October 1978.



The 1978 protest march to save Wood Quay.

Remembering FX Martin

An exhibition on the 'Save Wood Quay' campaign from the FX Martin archive

Personal papers of the late Rev Professor FX Martin were recently donated to the Library by the Augustinian Order in Ireland. A prominent historian with a wide range of research interests, Professor Martin, a former Trustee of the National Library of Ireland, was also the Chairman of the Friends of Medieval Dublin. In the late 1970s, he spearheaded the campaign to save the Wood Quay archaeological site in Dublin.

To mark the donation of this archive to the Library, an exhibition of selected Wood Quay campaign materials from the NLI archive is on display in the Library's Main Hall.

The Wood Quay controversy was one of the most dramatic chapters of Irish archaeological history. The site was selected by Dublin Corporation as the proposed location for their new civic offices, but would prove, however, to be one of the most important archaeological sites in Ireland, revealing new evidence about Viking and later medieval settlements in Dublin. Prior to the commencement of building work, excavations at Wood Quay revealed stratified deposits from the 11th to the 13th centuries, with evidence of Viking defence banks, land reclamation, successive waterfronts, and part of the 11th century stone city wall. A rich array of artefacts including Viking gaming counters, items of worked antler and walrus ivory, and jewellery of Baltic amber attested to Viking trade and craftsmanship, and gave key insights into the social history of Viking and early medieval Dublin.

In November 1977, acting on a tip-off from workmen that an unexcavated part of the site was due to be bulldozed, destroying the Viking earthen defences, Professor Martin and the Friends obtained a last-minute High Court injunction to restrain the bulldozers, and with an expert legal team which included then Senator Mary Robinson, began a lengthy legal process aimed at saving Wood Quay. In June 1978, a major victory was scored when the High Court declared part of the site a National Monument. A loophole in the law, however, enabled Dublin Corporation and the Commissioners of Public Works to authorise the destruction of the National Monument by joint consent, and on 29 August 1978 consent was officially authorised.

The ensuing campaign to save Wood Quay spanned the last years of the 1970s and the early 1980s, and was led with tireless enthusiasm by Professor Martin. The campaign was marked by injunctions, petitions, protest marches and ultimately occupation, when in June 1979 a group which included Professor Martin, the Friends, and various high-profile politicians, academics, writers, poets and artists, occupied the site for 20 days in a peaceful protest code-named 'Operation Sitric'.

The Wood Quay struggle captivated the Irish public who turned out in force in support. An estimated 20,000 people took to the streets in the September 1978 protest demonstration, while almost a quarter of a million signed petitions were delivered to the Tánaiste in December 1978. The story also generated huge interest from leading international scholars who were appalled by the decision to destroy what was regarded as one of the most important Viking sites in Europe.

Although the campaign ultimately failed to prevent the erection of the civic offices and preserve the archaeological remains, it did succeed in delaying building work, allowing for a more complete excavation at Wood Quay. Crucially, the campaign also heightened awareness of the importance of preserving Ireland's heritage.

The exhibition tells the story of the 'Save Wood Quay' campaign through contemporary documents and photographs. It includes flyers, posters and press releases for benefit performances and protest rallies, along with petition sheets, letters of support from Irish and international figures, and material relating to 'Operation Sitric'. The display also features television footage of the 1978 protest march addressed by then Senator Mary Robinson.

The exhibition opened on Tuesday 1 June 2010 and will run throughout the summer.

Ag Cuimhneamh ar FX Martin

Taispeántas ar an bhfeachtas chun an Ché Adhmaid a chaomhnú, bunaithe ar airchív FX Martin

Bhronn Ord na nAgaistíneach in Éirinn páipéir phearsanta an Ollaimh Oirmhinnigh FX Martin ar an Leabharlann Náisiúnta ar na mallaibh. Ba staraí gradamúil é an tOllamh Martin a raibh spéis aige i réimse leathan ábhar. Ba lontaobhaí de chuid na Leabharlainne é agus bhí sé ina Chathaoirleach ar Friends of Medieval Dublin. Go mall sna 1970idí, bhí sé chun tosaigh san fheachtas chun suíomh seandálaíochta na Cé Adhmaid i mBaile Átha Cliath a chaomhnú.

Mar cheiliúradh ar bhronnadh an airchív ar Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hÉireann, beidh ábhar as an airchív a bhaineann le feachtas na Cé Adhmaid ar taispeáint i Halla Mór na Leabharlainne ar feadh ráithe, Meitheamh, Iúil agus Lúnasa.

Bhí conspóid na Cé Adhmaid ar cheann de na heachtraí ba dhrámatúla dar thit amach riamh i stair sheandálaíochta na hÉireann. Bhí sé de rún ag Bardas Bhaile Átha Cliath oifigi nua a lonnú ar shuíomh na Cé ach fuarthas amach go raibh an suíomh céanna seo ar cheann de na háiteanna ba thábhachtaí in Éirinn ó thaobh na seandálaíochta de; thángthas ar fhianaise ann a bhain leis na Lochlannaigh agus le lonnaíochtaí eile a bhí i mBaile Átha Cliath níos faide anonn sa Mheánaois. Sular cuireadh tús leis an obair thógála, rinneadh tochairtí agus nochtadh sil-leagain shrathaithe ón tréimhse idir an 11^ú agus an 13^ú haois. Thángthas freisin ar fhianaise go raibh bruacha cosanta de chuid na Lochlannach agus éadain chomhleantacha le huisce ann, agus go ndearnadh míntírú ann. Bhí iarsmaí de bhalla cloiche cathrach a tógadh san 11^ú haois ann freisin. Fuarthas déantúsáin éagsúla a thug léargas maith ar chúrsaí trádála, ar scileanna ceardaíochta na Lochlannach agus ar ghnéithe den stair shóisialta sa Luath-Mheánaois i mBaile Átha Cliath. Ina measc bhí licíní le haghaidh cluichí, rudaí éagsúla déanta as beanna agus eabhar rosuailt, agus seodra d'ómra Baltach.

I mí na Samhna 1977, sceith oibríthe ar an láithreán tógála eolas go raibh cuid den suíomh a bhí gan tochairt le leanan le hollscartairí, rud a dhéanfadh scríos ar chosaintí cré na Lochlannach. D'éirigh leis an Ollamh Martin agus na Cairde urghaire a fháil ón Ard-Chúirt díreach in am chun cosc a chur ar na hollscartairí. Bhí próiseas fada dlí ann ina dhiaidh sin d'fhonn an Ché Adhmaid a chaomhnú. Bhí Máire Mhic Róibín, a bhí ina Seanadóir ag an am, mar chuid den shainfhoireann dlíodóirí a d'oibrigh ar an gcás. Bhí bua mór ann nuair a dhearbhaigh an Ard-Chúirt i mí an Mheithimh 1978 gur Séadchomhartha Náisiúnta

í an Ché. Bhí lúb ar lár sa dlí, áfach, agus bhí Bardas Bhaile Átha Cliath agus Coimisinéirí na nOibreacha Poiblí in ann scríos an tSéadchomhartha Náisiúnta a cheadú tríd an toiliú comhpháirteach; ar 29 Lúnasa 1978 rinneadh an toiliú sin a údarú go hoifigiúil.

Mhair an feachtas chun an Ché Adhmaid a chaomhnú go dtí go luath sna 1980idí, an tOllamh Martin go mór chun tosaigh ann, é ag obair go dúthrachtach díoghbháilte. Bhí urghairí, achainíocha agus agóidí ann, agus i mí an Mheithimh 1979 ghlac an tOllamh Martin, na Cairde agus polaiteoirí, acadóirí, scríbhneoirí, filí agus ealaíontóirí ardcháile seilbh ar an suíomh ar feadh 20 lá mar chuid d'agóid faoi shíocháin ar tugadh 'Operation Sitric' uirthi.

Lasadh bladhaire i gcroí mhuintir na hÉireann a thug tacaíocht láidir don fheachtas. Chuaigh thart ar 20,000 duine i mbun léirsithe i mí Mheán Fómhair 1978, agus shínigh beagnach ceathrú milliún duine achainithe a tugadh don Tánaiste i mí na Nollag 1978. Bhí suim mhór ag scoláirí móra idirnáisiúnta sa scéal; bhí alltacht orthu go raibh rún ann ceann de na suímh Lochlannacha ba thábhachtaí san Eoraip a scríos.

Sa deireadh thiar thall, níor éirigh leis na feachtasóirí cosc a chur ar thógáil oifigi an Bhardais agus níor caomhnaíodh na hiarsmaí seandálaíochta. Is é a bhí mar thoradh ar an scéal, áfach, gur cuireadh moill ar an obair thógála agus go ndearnadh tochairt níos cuimsithí sa Cé Adhmaid. Cuireadh an pobal ar an eolas maidir leis an tábhacht a bhaineann le hoidhreacht na hÉireann a chaomhnú, toradh a raibh tábhacht nach beag ag baint leis.

Léirítear scéal an fheachtais chun an Ché Adhmaid a chaomhnú sa taispeántas seo ina bhfuil cáipéisí agus grianghraif chomhaimseartha le feiceáil. Tá bileoigíní, póstaear agus preasráitis a bhaineann le ceolchoirmeacha agus agóidí ar son an fheachtais ann, chomh maith le hachainíocha, litreacha tacaíochta ó dhaoine mór le rá as Éirinn agus thar lear, agus ábhar a bhaineann le 'Operation Sitric'. Tá ábhar teilifíse ann ina bhfuil léirsiú 1978 le feiceáil, aitheasc leis an Seanadóir Máire Mhic Róibín san áireamh.

Osclaíodh an taispeántas Dé Máirt 1 Meitheamh agus mairfidh sé i rith an tSamhraidh.



'Occupation Sitric': a protestor keeps watch during the June 1979 site occupation. Photograph by Brian Barron, courtesy of the Irish Press Group.



The late Rev Professor FX Martin. Photograph by Brian Barron, courtesy of the Irish Press Group.

Wood Quay newsletter issued during the June 1979 site occupation.





An Irish cabin – the figures in the foreground do not appear in the published version.

Rare volume of 18th century drawings acquired by the Library

In this article, penned for *NLI News* by the distinguished archaeologist and historian Dr Peter Harbison, he describes some of the visual treasures contained in the Library's recently acquired hand-illustrated volume of Arthur Young's *A Tour in Ireland of 1780*, and explains why it will be of interest to students of architectural history and social history in particular.

The Library has recently acquired a volume of Arthur Young's *A Tour in Ireland* (London, 1780) which is unique and exciting in having bound into it a number of original drawings – many of them, I believe, by the author himself – thereby adding to the list of illustrators of Ireland in the 18th century, and making it likely that this was, indeed, once Young's own copy.

The book is certainly the work by which Young is best known in this country, as it gives valuable insights into the state and practices of agriculture in the period leading up to Grattan's Parliament. He had, however, also toured England and Wales, and was later to write up his *Travels in France* in 1793 at the height of the French Revolution. The son of a clergyman who was chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons in London, he visited Ireland three years in succession – 1776, 1777 and 1778 – and the title-page states that the volume brings his observations down to the end of 1779. His second visit was largely taken up with a stay in Mitchelstown, Co Cork, where he took advantage of being able to go on walks among the Galtee Mountains, and making pencil sketches of a cascade, though most of the other drawings in this volume are done in pen-and-wash.

His annual tours were made to the houses of the nobility and gentry, where he must have somewhat bored his hosts with his incessant questioning on agricultural matters. In his book, he praises the various styles of agriculture practised by those upper echelons of society whom he encountered, though he also seems to have had a soft spot for the poorer cottiers. While he criticises in general 'the fellows with

round hats who hunt in the morning, get drunk in the evening and fight the next morning', he is, nevertheless, universally polite in writing about his hosts – the reason, doubtless, having been that he hoped that seeing mention of their names in print would encourage them to buy more copies with which to impress their friends. However, as LM Cullen points out in the recently-published *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, Young was rather disappointed with the pre-publication subscriptions to his work which, apparently, led him to drop the idea of supplying numerous engraved plates – the only two which finally made it being the Powerscourt Waterfall and an Irish 'cabbin'. The latter omits the amusing domestic portrayal of humans and animals in the original on which it is based, these being among the best features of Young's own drawings, which also include an illustration of four stages in the construction of such a 'cabbin'.

The importance of the Library volume is that it gives us an idea of what the plates would have contained had Young gone to the expense of having them engraved. It should be said, however, that he was no great artist himself, to put it mildly, and an engraver would have been put to the pin of his collar to produce good-quality prints from Young's drawings. Only one – of Bellisle in Co Fermanagh – is signed with his initials AY but, as it has a light blue frame, we may also reasonably ascribe to him all the other pen-and-wash drawings with a similar surround. These are usually reflections of the estates, features and landscapes surrounding the houses he visited, such as Bellisle and Castle Cauldwell along with Lough Erne in Co Fermanagh, the Boyne obelisk in Co Meath, and scenic spots such as the aforementioned Powerscourt Waterfall and its Torc counterpart in Killarney, where he also produced drawings of the Lakes which were already becoming an important tourist attraction in his day. Connacht is also represented in illustrations – Ballina (with Nephin in the background), Clew Bay from Newport and a slightly better-quality view of the waterfall at Ballisadare in Co Sligo. The interest in trees seen in his drawings is also expressed in his view of 'General Cunningham's arbutus' ('one of the greatest natural curiosities on the kingdom!'), the sketch of which was certainly intended for later engraving, as the caption 'Plate II' has been crossed out.



View of lake with boat and boatmen.

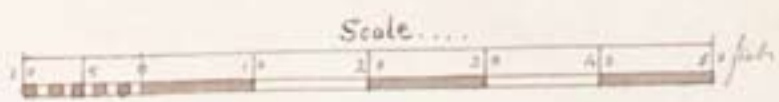
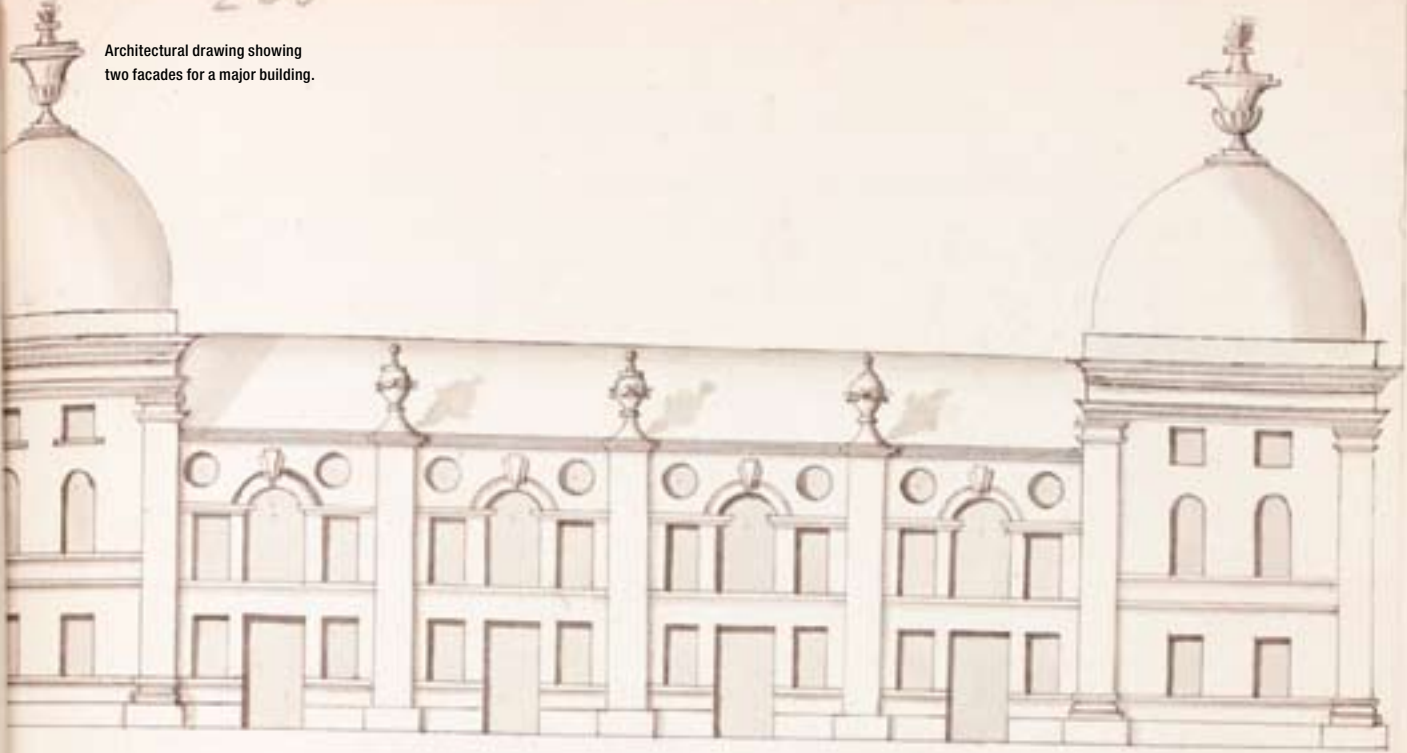
There are, however, a number of other 'artists' whose work is present in the Library volume, most of whom would have been described as 'draughtsmen' in those days. One, whose unidentifiable initials seem to be EC (followed by the letter *f*, probably for *fecit* = 'he made'), did a very curious pencil drawing of the city of Londonderry. Another more accurate draughtsman, anonymous for the lack of any signature, illustrated agricultural implements – ploughs, 'Lord Shannon's apparatus for harnessing bullocks by their horns' and Lord de Montalt's sowing drill. A rather unimaginative cartographer supplied simple maps of the Barony of Bargy and Forth in Co Wexford and the estuary of the Suir and the Nore in the neighbouring county of Waterford.

One rather different view is of Slane Castle in Co Meath which may well be the only surviving original drawing by the man who provided Young with much information (and probably also introductions to others), and who was himself to become chatelain of the property one year after the *Tour* was published – namely William Burton Conyngham (the subject of my next book). The way a rowing boat is shown on the banks of the Boyne is so similar to that shown in a Beranger copy of a Burton (Conyngham) watercolour in the Ulster Museum that the attribution has a lot to recommend it. Slane Castle is further represented in a very interesting architectural plan of the ground floor, identifying the uses of the various rooms and indicating through lighter shading some alterations that were obviously being proposed for the 17th century building. As we may presume that this and other drawings not by the book's author were probably collected by him while on tour, we may probably date the Slane plan to no later than 1778, even though it may have been some years later before all the drawings were finally inserted into the half-calf binding. The plan, which is probably a reduced version of an original, would thus be too early for James Gandon who first visited the castle and is known to have made sketches of it in 1781, nor can it be attributed to the mysterious Robinson who, according to Mark Odum in a *Country Life* article in July 1980, was the first to come up with the idea of adding a semi-circular tower in the centre of the south wall – a feature which does not appear in the Young volume drawing. Instead, it may perhaps be best

understood as a scaled-down version of a plan with alterations suggested by Thomas Penrose around 1773 as Irish agent for James Wyatt, who did not visit the country until more than a decade later. The same architectural draughtsman did a plan of Castletown House in Co Kildare, which is captioned as 'the Seat of the Rt. Hble. Thomas Connolly' (sic).

A different draughtsman was responsible for some equally fascinating drawings of Blarney in Co Cork which, after 1765, 'began to assume a town character of extraordinary pretension', though most of its 'trim and gaudy houses' had become roofless by 1825, and were 'little better than a mass of ruin, wearing rags of finery and weeds of woe' when the *Parliamentary Gazetteer* appeared in 1846. One of the four Blarney drawings shows the centrepiece of Mr Jefferey's 'thoroughly considered but novel and preposterous plan; he fashioned its central section into a large quadrangle, with a statue in the centre, a lawn and tree-lines in the area, and rows of embellished dwelling-houses along the sides'. Not shown in the drawings was a handsome stone bridge which, again according to the *Parliamentary Gazetteer*, 'Mr Jefferey constructed in the midst of an adjoining plain, with the design of drawing the river beneath it along a new cut, but left the bridge without a river, and the river without a bridge!' The partially grandiose classical buildings which are illustrated in the Young volume are presumably to be equated with those in Mr Jefferey's town which the *Gazetteer* described as 'too fine for the taste of operatives [in his linen and cotton manufacturies], and too grotesque for the fancy of the higher classes'. It is difficult to associate the drawings with any known architect of the period (scarcely Cork-born Thomas Ivory?), but they are valuable in showing a side of the glories of Blarney which, sadly, have not withstood the test of time.

Architectural drawing showing two facades for a major building.



Library innovations showcased at ‘Smart Economy in Action’ conference

‘Smart Economy in Action – Ireland in Transformation’ was the title of a conference hosted by Microsoft recently, as part of its 25 year anniversary celebrations. The event was designed to showcase innovative organisations and to give key leaders and decision-makers from the public, private and non-profit sectors an insight into how ground-breaking approaches in the use of technology are transforming the way businesses and organisations operate.

The Taoiseach, Mr Brian Cowen TD, and Microsoft’s EMEA President, Jan Muehlfeit, were guests of honour at the conference which was attended by over 300 senior leaders in the Irish economy – CEOs, MDs and Director Generals. They gathered to listen to presentations from the National Library of Ireland; the Department of Social Protection; the Local Government Computer Supply Board; Concern; O2, start-up companies HR Locker, Tradefacilitate and Surfseeds; Meath VEC, and Naomh Fiachra Primary School in Kilkenny. The common thread is that all of these organisations have transformed how they deliver services by embracing innovative practices and technologies, and dramatically changing their approach to how things were done previously.

In her case study presentation, the Director of the National Library of Ireland, Fiona Ross, described how the Library faces a number of challenges in terms of increasing public access to very rare and delicate documents, manuscripts and materials without compromising their quality. The first of these challenges is the issue of limited on-site exhibition space; only 26 artefacts can be displayed at any one time. Secondly, many artefacts are either too fragile or too large to be placed on public display in exhibition cases. Thirdly, there is the continuing challenge of how to meet the needs of the large numbers of international visitors as well as the growing numbers of queries from international students and people from both within and outside Ireland who are interested in Irish culture and history.

Up until recently, works of historical relevance could only be examined in detail by people who made a personal visit to the Library. For this reason, the Library investigated how it could use new and emerging channels and technology to increase access to its eight million-item collection, and initiated a project to explore new types of display solutions, such as surface technology. The first tangible manifestation of this project was the **Discover Your National Library: Explore, Reflect, Connect** exhibition, which is described in more detail in the article on page 2 of this edition of *NLI News*.

The exhibition enables visitors to view hundreds of rare items which are either too light sensitive, air sensitive or too valuable to be placed on public display. For those who are unable to go to the Library, the exhibition’s interactive tables are available online on www.nli.ie/discover.

By embracing technological innovations, the Library can completely transform how it shares its collections. Its audiences have expanded significantly as it continues its drive to engage with a wide variety of virtual visitors across the globe. When the *Discover* exhibition opened in January last, visitors were able to access hundreds of rare artefacts in the Kildare Street exhibition venue and also on the Library’s website. Additional rare treasures and documents of historical relevance are continually being digitised and uploaded to the site. The online exhibition has already received an estimated 13,000 unique visits from people around the world.

By exploiting cutting-edge technology in a way that enables online visitors to view, magnify and manipulate images of fragile and delicate objects in the kind of amazing detail that has hitherto been possible for only a limited number of researchers, academics and other specialists, the Library is now bringing arts and culture to growing numbers of people every day.



The Taoiseach, Mr Brian Cowen TD, is photographed here with Paul Rellis, Managing Director, Microsoft Ireland (left) and Jan Muehlfeit, EMEA President, Microsoft at the ‘Smart Economy in Action – Ireland in Transformation’ conference which took place on 26 April.



Sion Hill Dominican College Transition Year students Lauren Bowden, Holly Ellis and Aoife Rafter were among the first visitors to the *Discover Your National Library: Explore, Reflect, Connect* exhibition when it opened in January. They are photographed here with a poster for the Empire Marketing Board, dating from 1926.

National Library of Ireland Society

The National Library of Ireland Society is a voluntary support group which aims “to assist and support the National Library in the maintenance and expansion of its services and the improvement and protection of its status as the National Library of Ireland.” It arranges an annual programme of lectures on topics of Irish interest in a variety of subject areas including history, literature and current affairs; it organises an annual outing to historic houses and other venues, and it provides an opportunity for interested persons to support the Library at a crucial phase in its development.

The Society’s programme of events for the first half of this year got off to a successful start with the fifth John J O’Meara Memorial Lecture, which took place on 3 February. Entitled *If Newman were around today – reflections on higher education in the 21st Century*, it was given by Dr Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin. The respondent was Professor Dominic O’Meara, University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

Other highlights of the Society’s Spring/Summer programme included a lecture entitled *Lord Castlereagh and Ireland Reconsidered*, which was given by Dr John Bew, Peterhouse College, University of Cambridge; *Ireland in the 1950s*, a lecture given by Dr Niamh Purséil, Irish School of History and Archives, UCD, and *Eva Gore-Booth*, a lecture given by Dr Sonja Tiernan, Department of History, Trinity College Dublin.

The Society’s annual outing will take place on 19 June. The programme will include a tour of Shankill Castle in Co Kilkenny, home of the artist Elizabeth Cope; a tour of St Canice’s Cathedral and Round Tower in Kilkenny city, followed by lunch at the River Court Hotel. After lunch, the group will visit Rothe House and Gardens before travelling to Castlecomer Discovery Park for a tour of the museum there.

Details of Society events can be found on the Library website www.nli.ie. Lectures and other events begin at 7pm and take place in the Library’s Seminar Room.

Contacting us

For further information on the NLI Society, please contact Roger Courtney, Hon Secretary, NLI Society, National Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin 2. **Email:** rcourtney@nli.ie. **Tel:** 603 0284.

Music ‘Pathways to Learning’ scheme

The Library is participating in the ‘Pathways to Learning’ Music PAL scheme, which was devised by COLICO (the Committee on Library Cooperation in Ireland) and is designed to facilitate easy access to the music resources held in a broad range of libraries and archives across Ireland. Anyone who is following a recognised educational course or learning programme, or is simply pursuing a regular interest of their own, may apply to the library they use on a regular basis for a Music PAL Access Card. The card will allow them to visit and make use of facilities in 29 institutions which have registered to participate in the scheme. In the case of the National Library of Ireland, those presenting a Music PAL Access Card must first apply for a Reader’s Ticket or Manuscript Reader’s Ticket. More information on the scheme may be found on www.library.ie/pal.

The National Library is now on Facebook and Twitter

You can now receive updates about Library news and events by following our tweets on Twitter or by becoming a fan on Facebook. We are @NLIreland (<http://twitter.com/NLIreland>)

Comments and suggestions on *NLI News* should be addressed to Brid O’Sullivan. **Email:** bosullivan@nli.ie

Calendar of events

National Photographic Archive Summer exhibitions

From Tuesday 8 June until Saturday 19 June, the School of Media at the Dublin Institute of Technology will present the 2010 BA Photography graduate exhibition at the National Photographic Archive (NPA) in Temple Bar, Dublin. The **DIT Graduate Show**, featuring the diverse photographic projects of 22 students, showcases the best of emerging talent in Irish contemporary photography. Admission is free.



From Friday 2 July until Monday 2 August, the NPA will host **Fragments from a Broken World**, an exhibition of work by three artists – Peter Kennard, Cat Phillipps and Sean Hillen – who search newspaper archives, picture libraries and corporate advertising literature for source material to generate their vision of the world. The images they collect have previously circulated widely in the media; in reports of international conflicts; in advertising campaigns, and as popular tourist imagery. This NPA-hosted exhibition is part of Ireland’s first international photography festival, organised by PhotoIreland. The festival will celebrate the work of Irish and international artists and photographers in galleries and public spaces around Dublin City. For more information, see www.photoireland.org.



Royal Irish Academy Public Lecture

On Thursday 1 July at 11am, the Library will host a public lecture organised by the Royal Irish Academy. Entitled **Is there a history of medicine?**, it will be given by Professor Charles Rosenberg of Harvard University. The respondent will be Professor Greta Jones, University of Ulster. The lecture will take place in the Seminar Room. All are welcome and booking is not required. More information may be found on www.ria.ie.

Heritage Week 2010

On Wednesday 25 August, to mark its involvement in Heritage Week, the Library will be organising a guided tour and general introduction to the history of the building. The tour begins in the Library’s Main Hall at 11am. Booking is not required.

Uncovering Discover: the making of an exhibition

On Tuesday 24 August at 1pm, Elizabeth Kirwan, curator of the **Discover Your National Library: Explore, Reflect, Connect** exhibition will give a talk entitled *Uncovering Discover: the making of an exhibition*, during which she will describe the processes involved in creating this exhibition. This event will take place in the Seminar Room. All are welcome.

Care of Personal Collections workshop

On Thursday 26 August from 11am to 1pm, the Library will host a ‘Care of Personal Collections workshop’. At this event, which is aimed at adult collectors, participants will have an opportunity to meet the Library’s conservators and learn how the Library cares for its collections; they will also have an opportunity to acquire some tips on how to look after their own collections. Admission is free, but booking is essential. To reserve a place, telephone 01-603 0277.

If you would like to receive a copy of our monthly e-bulletin on upcoming Library events, email: mailinglist@nli.ie