

Cumann Leabharlann na hÉireann
The Library Association of Ireland



ANNUAL REPORT 2000

HONORARY OFFICERS 2000/2001

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The Executive Board met 7 times during the year:

April 28th (Limerick); May 25th (Limerick); June 22nd (Dublin); September 14th (Dublin); October 26th (Dublin); November 30th (Dublin); January 25th (Dublin).

ATTENDANCE RECORD:

Kathleen Browne (1); Leslie Bryan, (1); Jess Codd, (3); Valerie Coghlan, (4); Joe Donnelly, (5); Beatrice Doran, (4); Dolores Doyle, (3); Anthony Edwards (5); Deirdre Ellis-King, (3); John A Fitzgerald, (2); Ruth Flanagan, (3); Fionnuala Hanrahan, (1); Pat Lonergan, (5); Pat McMahon, (7); Agnes Neligan (3); Gobnait O'Riordan, (3); Hanna O'Sullivan, (3); Liam Ronayne, (4); Marjory Sliney, (5); Brendan Teeling (6); Donal Tinney, (6); Austin Vaughan, (5); Catherine Watters (6).

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AT 31ST DECEMBER 1999:
 635 Personal members and 79 Institutional members.

FIRST TWO PRESIDENTS OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND



DR. ROBERT LLOYD PRAEGER
 When the Library Association of Ireland was first established in October 1928, Dr. Robert Lloyd Praeger

was unanimously elected first president of the newly formed organisation. Though at the time retired from his position of Librarian of the National Library of Ireland, he had more than thirty years practical experience as a librarian.

Qualified both as an engineer as well as a librarian, it is as a botanist that his name survives; indeed it might be said that he was one of the foremost Irish botanists, and such books as *Botanist in Ireland* (1934), *Natural History of Ireland* and the ever-green and beautiful book, *The way that I went* (1937) will survive when much else that is written is forgotten. Praeger's collected essays *A populous solitude* (1941) and *Beyond soundings* (1930) mirror the mind and soul of a truly great man.



DR. JOHN F.W. HOWLEY
 Dr. John F.W. Howley, Professor of Philosophy and Librarian in University College Galway, was President

of the Library Association of Ireland, with the exception of one break from 1930 to 1940. Of librarians, whom he held in high esteem, he once said: "You are the natural educators of the adult reading public, and you can do much to help the teachers of Ireland with your Juveniles. There is no limit to your powers for good or evil, for you are the Nation's Keepers of the Printed Books."

While it may be difficult to say if a Professor of Philosophy could make a good librarian, there is no doubt that the average librarian is in fact, a philosopher. One thing we may be sure of, John Howley was, in the eyes of his colleagues, both an able philosopher and an able librarian.

The Library Association of Ireland

The Library Association of Ireland is the professional body in Ireland for those engaged in librarianship and information management.

Established in 1928, its first stated objective was to promote the welfare of libraries in Ireland.

Over a period of 70 years the Association has won national respect and recognition. It has worked closely with various government departments on questions of concern to libraries and it is a nominating body for elections to Seanad Eireann.

Today the Association strives to be a vibrant, vital, professional voice for those engaged in Librarianship and Information management.

The Library Association of Ireland needs new people to become involved in the affairs of the Association. There are many calls from members of this Association to respond or to take a position on many important issues facing the library service today. Our Association needs more people coming forward who will be active in addressing the demands which are coming from the membership.

It is easy to call for action to be taken, and, as President, I have heard many such calls in the past two years, but not enough people are coming forward who are willing and able to make things happen.

I am asking every member of the Association to give serious consideration to this matter. We need a strong group of officers, and a strong executive board, to deal with important issues such as the Information Society, reading and literacy, and the wider role of all libraries in today's society.

We need people to become involved in assisting with our publications, meetings, continuing education programmes and conferences.

The strength of every Association lies in its members, and to give strength to the Library Association of Ireland we need the help and co-operation of every librarian, not, let us stress, for what they may receive from the Association, but for what they can give.

The Library Association of Ireland must speak for all librarians and for all libraries. To quote from an editorial in *An Leabharlann* in 1953, "sectional interests, futile and cross-purpose debates serve us ill, and tend to obscure the greater national and cultural interests of our Association. Our appeal therefore, should be for greater unity among ourselves so that we may present the broad issues of our problems clearly and unequivocally."

PAT MCMAHON,
President,
 Library Association of Ireland.
 February 2001.

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From the president...

What does a man think about?

What does a man think about, working alone all day?

What does a man think about, working all alone all day

Down in the cranberry, fern, and waterlily country?

What does a man know must not happen to him yet.

Is it his boat broken or drifted, his house hurt by the weather, his own age.

No. He thinks a boat, weather, the tide all mean well for him, thinks, somehow all this “can give me what I must provide.”

What does a man think, driving to get the day's food and mail, up in the stony-river country, where the evening road is pine-cool.

Is it a letter more than anything else in the world he hopes for?

Man looks at life and sees that it comes to him from somewhere far beyond his reach. He looks at life and dreams that it is good, sees that it is good.

A letter, literature, a means of communication elevates him, tears him from the normality, lifts him out of the mediocre, and brings him closer to the divine essence of things.¹

Addressing the Library Association of Ireland Annual General Meeting in Cork on March 9th 2000, the President of the Association reminded his listeners that “this right to speak and to write – that is to express one self and to communicate with others is one of the most basic and immutable human rights, that each individual should be able to possess.

“This possession of a means of self-expression might bring the ability to engage with the world – the world of reality – in a way that's right and proper for the human soul: And the way that's right and proper for the human soul was through the exercise of creativity.”

He quoted Nuria Amat, a former lecturer in information science at the University of Barcelona, who said that “I am interested in books with words that reach right inside me, books that are precisely not the light literature that is popular today. When there is truth, when there is intention, when there is magic ... I enjoy reading works that let me see a new world, this new way of seeing things.” In these times which are characterised by the total domination of modern technologies and modes of communication, the President stressed that it is necessary and urgent to reconsider language, and the role of books and reading.

Addressing the Assistant Librarians Conference in Westport in October, the President, Pat McMahon, spoke about liberating and non-liberating dreams as they had been

defined by the Greek writer Vassilis Vassilikos.

Liberating dreams are those which keep you vigilant in this miserable existence ... they are the dreams you have when you lose your self in a book, enjoy a piece of music, dream about falling in love ... liberating dreams hate all those things which keep us grounded in life ... and we emerge rejuvenated from any liberating dream.

However side by side with the individual liberating dream we have its collective counterpart ... the non-liberating dream. This is the dream which television advertising tries to sell you ... telling you you can achieve happiness if you buy a new car. The non-liberating dream is everywhere today ... everyone is selling it to you every minute of your waking life. Most shops on main street are in the business. But there are exceptions. The public library is one of the few remaining places still in the business of offering the public a liberating dream.²

The Higher Education Authority last year published figures on the social backgrounds of entrants to higher education. 67% or two thirds come from backgrounds where the parents are either employers or managers, professionals, or farmers. Less than 2% of entrants to university come from unskilled backgrounds.

These people who do not make it to university, or who make it to university in the face of adversity, have dreams too. Circumstances dictate that watching television is how they spend much of their time, and consequently the impossible non-liberating dreams are hitting them in the face every day. And the dreams these people frequently find refuge in are ecstasy and heroin addiction, not to mention alcohol. The death toll from such addictions was 66 in Dublin last year.



And another difficulty, which we who work in libraries should be aware of, is that the 66% of the entrants who are from comfortable backgrounds are also comfortable with the trappings of university life, and are comfortable using academic and public libraries, and of course we librarians are comfortable with them.

Those who are excluded from university life are intimidated by life on the campus, and feel uncomfortable with libraries. How comfortable are we librarians with those who can not afford to make it to university?

We talk about our provision for the “disadvantaged” or

the “socially excluded” but recent research identified by the UK Library Association has highlighted just how marginal and superficial this provision really is.

People who work in the public library service need a finely-honed sense of the absurdities of life, as Grace Anne DeCandido reminds us, “because you will deal with them every day, and many of them will not have an aroma of sweetness about them.”³

Public doesn't mean clean or sane or similar to ourselves; we must always be aware of that. We should also remember that every individual will respond to a sincere interest and an open smiling face. We are a service profession, and we need a tender openness toward those we serve: students, faculty, children, adult learners, the unemployed, the down-at heel, the “winos”, or middle-class executives.

These are things we have to face up to now more than ever.⁴

For the first time, because of increased bookfunds, and investment in technology and so on, we have the wherewithall to do things we said we always wanted to do.



The President in the course of the year stressed the importance of the Library as a social space, pointing out that, in the biblical sense, wherever two or more are gathered there is sharing, there is participation, there is language and there is imagination. He quoted the President of the American Library Association, Sarah Ann Long, who said that “people are today hungry for community. Since libraries of all types are often at the geographic centre of the communities they serve, they are naturally positioned to be community gathering places. Couple this advantage with the other usual librarian talents: tolerance for diversity of opinion and facilitation skills, and you have an organisation poised to be integral to every community decision.”

Addressing the Munster Section of the LAI, the President spoke about the conglomerates who actively block the spiritual flight of people, who sell non-liberating dreams, and keep people bogged down in the mundane and the banal. Serious damage has been done to artistic production and to book publishing by the scourges of commercialism, profiteering, marketing and publicity. The writer Curtis White reminds us that commercial publishing houses have, by keeping faith with their accountants only,

jeopardised the meaningfulness of the literary past and the very possibility for a literary future. The drivel, he said, that has regularly cascaded from New York in the course of the last twenty years has performed admirably in its task of keeping people stupid.⁵ Let us hope that our libraries will always find priority space on the shelves for Proust, Joyce, Lawrence, Camus and Eliot, and that we will resist filling our libraries with the memoirs and ideas of royal princesses, discoverers of the twelve secrets of financial success, football managers, evangelists, rock musicians, and “war criminals whose mothers never loved them.”⁶

Our libraries must not be market driven. As Sallie Tisdale contends in her famous Harper's contribution, libraries have an intrinsic value that can be held up to the community at large, regardless of profitability and popularity.⁷ Let us have book collections that shape our consciousness while strengthening a larger sense of community.

Today many of the large media conglomerates have a stranglehold on what can and cannot be published. Librarians must nurture the small publishers who are still fighting to keep literacy alive in a world that seems to want to crush it on all sides. Today every bookshop appears to be selling the same books. We must not replicate on our shelves the same collections of books that every high-street bookshop appears to be stocking.

It is to be hoped that book publishing, bookselling and librarianship remain a business of passion and conviction, however much accountants and marketing men try to eliminate all passion from the process.

It is of course a fallacy that numbers and sales determine the importance of books. The truth is that many of our most significant books were either printed in tiny first editions or not printed at all until many decades after their composition.

Publishers used to be able to count on libraries to buy a copy or three of almost any serious new book. Are we now dissipating our book budgets into cyberspace?

We need to seriously consider our relationship with Internet provision. There is more information in the midst of less understanding than ever before. But mere accumulation of information does not automatically create an educated person.⁸

As Michael Prowse pointed out in the Financial Times last autumn, we are today rich in everything that can be readily priced and sold on the market, and poor in every thing that cannot be easily commodified. Market forces have turned the urban landscape into a parody of shop-until-you-drop America. Even Sunday has its rush hour as

the shoppers flood to the shopping centres to pay their respects to Mammon.⁹

And he asks are we now to become like the United States, where the cornucopia of private wealth contrasts starkly with the inadequacies of public service — from transport and healthcare to education? Today there is a greater choice of television channels than ever before, but it is mainly a choice of pap — of programmes that will do nothing to lift the horizons of young people; you just need to look at the blank, yobbish faces of the young (and not-so-young) people. And RTE, struggling to hold its audience, is now almost indistinguishable from its commercial competition.¹⁰

Market forces, alone, cannot create either a good society or a happy society. The public library must always be a place for the beating heart ... a place where man can come to terms with all of his visions, wishes, dreams, and experiences. We need libraries to remain places which nourish the dream, the liberating dream and enable it to be carried, fragile but unbreakable, everywhere.

One of the most interesting observations made at the County and City Librarians Autumn Seminar in Dungarvan were the remarks of the Longford County Manager, Michael Killeen. He spoke about the changing circumstance in which public libraries now operate. Referring to local communities where the word of the school-teacher or the parish priest no longer hold sway, he emphasised the role which libraries have to play in informing people and being a place of informal education. He held up the idea of the library being a place in each community where authoritative information was available and where each person might realise his or her potential.

On Friday September 30th the President of the Library Association of Ireland welcomed the President, the Director and the Council of EBLIDA to Dublin. In the course of his address of welcome he spoke of the wonderful resource that is the network of libraries from the north of Finland down to Sicily, and from the Atlantic shores of Ireland and Portugal across to the newly emerging Eastern countries. He spoke of the huge contribution which thousands of libraries from the large national and university libraries down to village libraries were making to European culture and knowledge, and he emphasised that EBLIDA had an important co-ordinating and leading role to play in harnessing this resource

The president called for support for the European Parliament report on the *Role of Libraries in the Modern World*. The report, known as the Rynänen report, identified some 240,000 library staff in Europe who meet

the most disparate needs for knowledge and cultural material at nearly 100,000 library outlets, and called on the European Commission and the Member States to support a number of measures in regard to consolidating the growing role played by libraries in organising widespread access to knowledge.

Notes

- 1 Holmes, J. "What does a man think about", in *The Faber Book of Modern American Verse*, edited by W.H. Auden. London: Faber and Faber, 1955
- 2 Vassilikos, V. *And dreams are dreams*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 1996
- 3 DeCandido, G.A. "Ten Graces for New Librarians" in www.well.com/user/ladyhawk/albany.html
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 White, C. "Introduction". *Gargoyle*, No. 39/40. Washington: 1997.
- 6 Leonard, J. "Cri de Coeur". *New York Review of Books*, Volume XLVIII, No. 2, February 2001.
- 7 Tisdale, S. "Silence please: the public library as entertainment centre". *Harpers*, Volume 294, March 1997
- 8 Fulbright, H.M. *The approaching millennium: challenges and opportunities*. London: The British Library, 1997.
- 9 Prowse, M. "Pause for thought". *Weekend FT, The Financial Times*, 2000.
- 10 Ibid

Cover photograph by Roberto Spocci, Parma, Italy, showing the poet Desmond O'Grady reading from his work in a public library, accompanied by Dr. Valerio Cervetti, Director, City Library, Parma, Italy and Guido Conti, Italian writer.

Photograph right of child reading by Roberto Spocci, Parma, Italy.

Back cover World Book Day logo courtesy of the Finnish Library Association.



Pat McMabon

Branching Out

Initiatives by Minister Dempsey keep libraries open and thriving

Branching Out – a new Public Library Service, issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government just two years ago, is perhaps the most important report on Irish public libraries since the first Public Library Act of 1855.

Whether you are a member of staff of a large urban branch library or a small, one person library, you will find that this report is changing and improving your local public library service.

Over several decades public libraries have made differences to the lives of many, many people, but too often these libraries have had to struggle with poor book-funds, buildings which were frequently inadequate, and with limited technology.



Noel Dempsey, TD

The Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Noel Dempsey, TD, has decided that between now and the year 2006 a sum of £75 million is to be invested in public libraries throughout the country. With this substantial amount of expenditure the Minister wants to do three things:

- improve library buildings
- provide new information and communication technology in every library
- have a quality book stock and enhanced opening hours available to all library users

Progress is being made in all three areas.

The investment, at the end of last year, of over £1 million by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in Internet PCs in libraries has been very positively received by the public. A glance at the Information Society Commission website will show you how libraries, more than any other

centre or organisation, are now providing Internet Access right across the country. The Department of the Environment and Local Government at the end of the year 2000 made an additional sum of £1 million available as a second phase of this exciting project.

The Department of the Environment and Local Government also earlier in the year confirmed the allocation of another capital sum of £1 million for library bookstocks. The Library Association of Ireland very much welcomes this allocation. What the Library Association particularly welcomes is the continued insistence by the Minister that local authority bookfunds must reach a per capita allocation of £2.50 by the year 2002. The strength of a library service depends on a quality book stock being available in every branch library. Achieving a per capita book fund of £2.50 per capita by 2002 would represent very significant progress for the library service, and it looks likely that this will be achieved.

An implementation committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Tom O'Mahony, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment and Local Government, continues to examine how best to implement the proposals for the multi-annual programme of capital investment in the Public Library service. Three sub-committees of the main implementation committee were established to look at questions of Access, Training and Technology. The Library Association of Ireland is represented on the main committee and on the sub-committees.

The Copyright and Related Rights Act

Copyright legislation is developing at national and at European level. A small group of Irish librarians has been actively involved with developments on both fronts. Mary Doyle and Joe Donnelly and other members of the Government Libraries Section have been involved



The Library Association of Ireland is a nominating body for elections to Seanad Eireann. At the last Seanad election in 1997 it nominated Paschal Mooney who successfully contested the election.

in researching implications of the legislation for all types of libraries and have made that research generally available. Two librarians, in particular, Jennefer Aston (Law Library) and Veronica Morrow (T.C.D.), made use of that research when lobbying on both the Irish Bill and the E.U. draft directive on copyright.

The majority of amendments proposed by Jennefer Aston and Veronica Morrow were accepted by the Minister of State, Mr Kitt during the Bill's progress through the Oireachtas. Important amendments achieved by librarians include the following:

The Act now allows a librarian supply to a user a second copy where an earlier copy has been lost, stolen, discarded or destroyed or a reasonable period of time has elapsed. A copy of the same material can be supplied to up to 3 persons with related requirements rather than to only one person. The librarians ensured that the legislation covered library lending adequately. The quantitative limits under the library exemptions were made more flexible and workable.

The Act was passed as the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000 and came into force on the 1st January 2001.

The President of the L.A.I., Pat McMahon, Joe Donnelly (The Judges' Library), Mary Doyle (Department of Agriculture) and Veronica Morrow (T.C.D.) met with the Minister of State with responsibility for Intellectual Property, Mr Tom Kitt, and officials of the Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment to discuss the Statutory Instruments which would implement prescription of libraries under the Act. A number of S.I.s, just published as this article is written, not only commence the Act but fill out the details and lay down regulations governing libraries. These S.I.s prescribe libraries for the purpose of the library exemptions and for the lending provisions

(which are actually to be found in the sections on Education, but which have a much wider application). Surprise and concern have been expressed in some quarters because, unexpectedly, the library exemptions have been made subject to conditions, notably the compulsion to obtain a signed declaration from the reader before supplying the copy and the compulsion to charge for those copies. The surprise arises because this fundamentally changes, through secondary legislation, the exemptions in the Act, which had been debated at length in its course through the Oireachtas. The concern is principally because of the administrative problems involved in implementing the requirement to obtain the signed declaration and to charge a fee in every case of copying. No doubt the debate will continue.

At time of writing the draft Directive on Copyright is still under discussion. Its career has been very varied, at times becoming very problematic for libraries, but more recent drafts have shown improvements.

Reports of Committees of the Executive Board Children's and School Libraries Panel

Marjory Sliney, Fionnuala Hanrahan, Pat Lonergan, Valerie Coghlan, Ruth Flanagan, Kathleen Browne.

The above Panel did not meet during the year. However, the Policy Statement on Library Services to Children and Young People has been printed and it is hoped that it will be officially launched soon.

The main concern of the Panel – that of improving school library provision – has been taken up by a committee with representatives from the Department of the Environment and Local Government, the Department of Education and Science, the Library Association of Ireland and An Chomhairle Leabharlanna.

The association is represented by Mary Carleton Reynolds and Fionnuala Hanrahan on the Working Party on School Library Development, and by Valerie Coghlan and Fionnuala Hanrahan

on the School Library Research Project.

Education and Training Panel

Dolores Doyle (Convenor), Gerard Maher, Valerie Coghlan, Mary Burke, Catherine Watters, Anthony Edwards, Agnes Neligan, Gobnait O'Riordan, Siobhan O'Rafferty, Carmel O'Sullivan.

A meeting took place of the Education & Training Panel to discuss issues regarding acceptable library qualifications from other countries. In addition, a meeting has been arranged to meet with Dr. Barbara-Traxler Brown, Acting Head of Library & Information Studies at U.C.D. to discuss with her, and members of her Department, Distance Education Programmes for staff who cannot attend U.C.D. on a full-time basis. Other topics such as continuing education and training will also be discussed with her by members of the Education & Training Panel. Following the meeting, details of any decisions made or possible future developments will be conveyed to the membership of the L.A.I.

European and International Affairs Panel

Liam Ronayne (Convenor), Pat McMahan, Beatrice Doran, Leslie Bryan, Marjory Sliney

As in 1999, the European and International Affairs Panel's main issue of concern in 2000 was the Copyright and Related Rights Act, which was finally enacted in mid-year.

Because of the over-riding importance of the Copyright and Related Rights Act, other issues received less attention than we would have liked. An ad-hoc group of librarians, who had contributed greatly to the lobbying effort on the Copyright and Related Rights Bill during 1999, continued their work in 2000, and late in the year it was agreed that these librarians would become members of the Panel. The Panel also decided to seek an input from legal counsel in drawing up guidelines on the new copyright legislation, which, it is expected, will be given to frontline library staff.

The Convenor attended the Annual Council of EBLIDA in May, where

the Directive on Copyright in the Information Society was discussed. This is the latest in a series of legislative measures, prompted not by concerns central to libraries and librarians, but 1) because of the need to enact copyright laws which make sense in the digital age; and 2) the desire on the part of the European Commission to extend the internal market to include books and other media, and intellectual property in general. The draft Directive has undergone significant amendment since it was first introduced, and may still be amended – for better or worse – before its adoption (expected to be in February 2001). The Panel is continuing to monitor the draft Directive as it evolves, and to lobby Irish MEPS.

Finance and General Purposes Committee

CHAIR: Liam Ronayne

SECRETARY: Catherine Watters

COMMITTEE: Anthony Edwards, Fionnuala Hanrahan, Pat McMahan, Brendan Teeling

The Committee assists the Officers of the Association in the financial and administrative arrangements of the Association. The Committee met on six occasions in 2000.

Administrative Secretary.

During the course of 2000, the duties of the Administrative Secretary were clarified. Eileen O'Donohue, who was appointed in 1999, continued in the post and assisted the Honorary Secretary in the day to day administration of the Association.

LAI Website.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee, on the instructions of the Executive Board, undertook a review of the Association's website and have contracted a webdesign consultancy to redesign the site. This work, which will be completed in 2001, will ensure that the Association's presence on the www will fully represent the Association's commitment to quality information and publications in all formats.

Information Society Panel

Brendan Teeling (Convenor), Fionnuala Hanrahan, Catherine Watters, Beatrice Doran, Jess Codd, Gobnait O'Riordan, Clara Cullen,

Siobhan O'Rafferty, Lee Komito, Anthony Edwards, Deirdre Ellis-King, Donal Tinney, Austin Vaughan, Jess Codd.

Following a request from the Executive Board the Information Society Panel undertook to:

1. draft a response to the national policy report *Joining Forces: delivering libraries and information services in the information age*;
2. prepare a policy document on the Information Society for the Board.

The Panel decided to tackle the response to *Joining Forces* first, as that response will feed in to an overall policy document.

Preliminary work on the response was completed and a draft will be presented to the executive board in January 2001.

Committee on School Library Development

CHAIR: Valerie Coghlan

SECRETARY: Liz Turley

COMMITTEE: Mary Carleton Reynolds, Fionnuala Hanrahan, Helen Kilclyne, Pat Lonergan, Patricia Quigley, Marjory Sliney, Rosemary Walton.

Library File: Making a Success of the School Library (eds. V. Coghlan, P. Quigley, R. Walton), L.A.I., 1999 was launched near the end of 1999. Response to this publication has been very positive during the past year. It was distributed free of charge to primary and post-primary schools throughout Ireland, stimulating interest in school libraries and providing guidance to many schools in the setting up and running of their libraries. Sales have been constant throughout the year, many of the requests for *Library File* coming from outside Ireland following very positive reviews in a number of publications.

Healthcare Libraries Panel

Beatrice Doran (Convenor), Margaret Dillon, Tony Linnane, Barry O'Sullivan, Ann Tierney, Mary Riordan.

Panel members met once during the year to prioritise the issues which this new panel might usefully pursue. The clear consensus from

the meeting was that the Panel's energies should be directed towards pursuing the implementation of the recommendations of the MacDougall Report *Information for Health: Access to Information Services in Ireland*, published by the LAI in 1995. This report had been jointly commissioned by the Department of Health & Children (DOHC) and the LAI and it provides the blueprint for the development of healthcare library & information services in Ireland. To date few advances have been made in implementing its key recommendations. The Panel proposed to prepare a comprehensive submission to be forwarded by the LAI Executive to the Department for consideration.

Meanwhile, the Minister for Health & Children announced a one-day Conference which was to form part of a consultation process for the development of a National Health Information Strategy. The Panel prepared a submission which was sent to the DOHC in advance of the Conference in November. The submission pointed to both MacDougall research reports and emphasised that healthcare library & information professionals were key stakeholders in the development of the concept of a strategy for national health information. In 2001 the Panel will seek to secure the LAI's role in informing the strategy development process.

Annual General Meeting 2000

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Metropole Hotel, Cork, on Thursday 9th March 2000. Pat McMahan, County Librarian, Galway County Library, was elected President of the Association. Anthony Edwards, Executive Librarian, Clare County Library, was elected Honorary Secretary and Catherine Watters, Information Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers, was elected Honorary Treasurer. Marjory Sliney, Senior Librarian, Fingal County Library and Valerie Coghlan, Librarian, Church of Ireland College of Education, were elected Vice-Presidents.

The following resolutions were passed at the meeting for action by the Executive Board.

1. One of the main purposes of the Library Association of Ireland is to keep books and reading central to our personal lives and to the life of local communities. This Association therefore welcomes the National Reading Initiative and strongly encourages all libraries in all sectors to play a full role in the initiative in the coming year. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
2. That this Meeting welcomes the various Awareness and Learning programmes that have been put in place by the Information Society Commission. In relation to the recent discussion document, *IT Access for All*, this Association supports the positioning of libraries as central to the public information and learning process, and the role of library services in the creation, presentation and evaluation of information products. It calls upon Government to accelerate investment in ICT, in the implementation of Library Systems, and in Access and Public Learning projects such as the Netd@ys Initiative, so that national economic and cultural development is sustained. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
3. Central to the success of the *Branching Out* report is the extension of Access, Service Delivery and Opening hours. This Association calls on the Department of the Environment and Local Government to fully support the special committee set up to achieve this objective and provide whatever funding is necessary to vigorously pursue a programme of action. *Proposed by the County and City Librarians' Section.*
4. The Library Association of Ireland calls on the Minister for the Environment and Local Government to seek free Internet Telecommunications access for all public libraries. *Proposed by the County and City Librarians' Section.*
5. That this Annual General Meeting welcomes the recommendations and the content of the An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/Arts Council report, *Arts and the magic of the word*, and directs the incoming Executive Board to engage with both the Arts Council and the Library Council, and relevant Government Departments in order to ensure widespread acceptance of both the spirit and the substance of the report. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
6. That the Library Association of Ireland welcomes the growing recognition by both Local Authorities and by the Department of the Environment and Local Government of the principle of a public library service which is free, open and accessible to all, and directs the incoming Executive Board to work towards the full acceptance of this basic tenet of public library service. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
7. That the institutional subscription to the Library Association of Ireland be set at £125 for the year 2001. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
8. That this Association through its Executive Board and through its representatives on the *Branching Out* Implementation Committee and sub-committees continue to productively engage with representatives of Government Departments, state agencies, and local authority members and staff, in order to ensure that all the recommendations in the report are fully implemented. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
9. That the Executive Board consider conducting a membership satisfaction survey to establish current opinions, suggestions, and benchmarks, with a view to improving communication and support services for members of the Association. *Proposed by the Academic and Special Libraries Section.*
10. That the Library Association of Ireland call on the Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment with responsibility for Intellectual Property to liaise with relevant professional bodies, such as the Library Association of Ireland, the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (Irish Branch), the Institute of Information Scientists (Irish Branch) and the Irish Region of the Society of Archivists, when designating "prescribed libraries and archives" for the purposes of the Copyright and Related Rights Act, in order to consider the full range of libraries and archives in the jurisdiction. *Proposed by the Government Libraries Group.*
11. That the Library Association of Ireland call on the Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment with responsibility for Intellectual Property to do all in his power to have Article 5(2) of the Berne Convention updated to recognise the reality of the Internet, i.e. to recognise that publishing on the Internet implies a willingness on the part of the author or publisher to make the material available without restriction (in the absence of an indication to the contrary), and therefore a presumption in law to that effect should be permitted by the Convention. *Proposed by the Government Libraries Group.*
12. That this Annual General Meeting welcomes the recent initiatives of the Department of Education and Science in relation to literacy, to the promotion of reading for pleasure, and to the development of research skills as expressed in recent developments such as the introduction of the Revised Curriculum for Primary Schools, investment in books for students, and the launching of the National Reading Initiative. This Meeting calls upon the Department to acknowledge the contribution of libraries to education in Ireland, to acknowledge also the sterling work of the Local Authority School Library Service with regard to primary schools over the past forty years. In order to ensure the development of a comprehensive national School Library Service to primary and secondary schools this meeting calls upon the Department, as a matter of urgency, to involve itself in a Planning and Management Process that will identify issues, priorities, service requirements and resources in this sector. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*
13. The Library Association of Ireland calls on the Minister for Education and Science to introduce a new policy document on the provision of libraries in all schools. *Proposed by the Executive Board.*

Annual Conference 2000

The Annual Joint Conference of the Library Association of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Branch of the Library Association took place in the Grand Hotel Malahide from April 11th to April 14th 2000.

The Conference was successful on many levels. The conference organisers offered a high quality programme of lectures, issue-driven as had been promised.

The experiment of running an "open day" was very successful. It brought many new faces to the conference. In order to facilitate the attendance of as many people as possible, the Library Association arranged transport from a number of points around the country.

During the "open-day" the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Noel Dempsey, T.D., launched *Joining Forces*, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna's document on delivering library and information services in the information age. The Minister later addressed the full conference. The launch and the minister's address were the highlight of the conference.

Reports of Sections & Groups Academic and Special Libraries Section

CHAIR: Caitriona Sharkey (Ernst & Young)

TREASURER: Colleen O'Kane (LK Shields Solicitors)

COMMITTEE: Nicky Kilroy (KPMG), Teresa Wittington (Central Catholic Library), Elaine Doherty (DIT)

During 2000 the activities of the section included the following:

Annual Seminar:

The Annual Seminar was held in Dublin on 18th Feb. 2000, and was entitled 'Knowledge Management – Impact on Information Professionals'

The seminar was chaired by Mr. Aidan Beatty, Knowledge Manager at Davy Stockbrokers, and the speakers were:

Beatrice Doran, RCSI;
Tina Kinirons, Microsoft Ireland;
Gerry McGovern, NUA;
John Deacon, Shell Services International;
David Smyth, Bar Library, Belfast;
Allan Foster, Keele University.
Ms. Beatrice Doran also spoke on behalf of the Section at the Annual L.A.I. Conference held in May.

Library Visits:

During the past year the Section organised 2 library visits: to the Smurfit Business School, and to Marsh's Library

Annual General Meeting:

The Section's AGM was held on 15th June 2000 in the Royal Irish Academy, and was followed by an interesting and illustrative talk by Maire Kennedy of Dublin Public Libraries on 'Women and Reading in 18th Century Ireland'.

The Committee of the Academic & Special Libraries Section would like to thank all of those who participated in, supported and attended the events organised.

Assistant Librarian's Section

CHAIR: Teresa Walsh, Dublin Public Libraries

VICE CHAIR: Jess Codd, Tipperary Joint Libraries Committee

SECRETARY: Gerard Flannery, Tipperary Joint Libraries Committee

TREASURER: Pat Lonergan, Kildare Co. Library

COMMITTEE: Eva Berkery, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna; Tony Cox, Westmeath Co. Library; Carmel Daly, Clare Co. Library; Breeda Gilligan, Roscommon Co. Library; Jarlath Glynn, Wexford Co. Library; Brendan Martin, Offaly Co. Library; Thomas Murtagh, Mayo Co. Library; Dorothy O'Reilly, Kilkenny Co. Library; Peter Rabbitt,

Galway Co. Library; Sheila Tierney, Louth Co. Library; Josephine Vahey, Galway Co. Library.

The Committee met four times during the year. The AGM of the Section was held at The Central Library, ILAC Centre, Dublin on 7th March. This meeting was preceded by a guided tour of the National Photographic Archive in Meeting House Square, Temple Bar, Dublin.

The Section's Annual Conference was held in Westport from 13-15 October. Entitled "Reporting On Libraries", it dealt with developments arising from the two recent reports *Branching Out* and *Joining Forces*. The Conference was officially opened by Library Association of Ireland President Pat McMahon, and was attended by 60 delegates representing library services throughout the country and library support trades.

Ms. Norma McDermott, Director of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, in her opening paper, examined how the implementation of *Joining Forces* be developed in co-operation with the Public Library Service. This paper was followed by workshops based on two of the Branching Out Steering Committees. These were Staff Training and Development, facilitated by Mr. Austin Vaughan, Mayo Co. Librarian; and Access, Service Delivery and Opening Hours, facilitated by Mr. Brendan Teeling, Assistant Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. The final conference paper was given by Mr. Donal Brady, Waterford County Librarian, who examined how ICT developments arising from *Branching Out* will affect Public Library Services. Delegates also toured the Foxford Woollen Mills Visitor Centre nearby.

Cataloguing and Indexing Group

CHAIR: Jane Gribbon (University of Limerick)

TREASURER: Breda Long (National University of Ireland, Cork)

SECRETARY: Mícheál Ó hAodha (University of Limerick)

COMMITTEE: Kay Butler (Dublin Corporation Public Libraries); Patricia Dowling (Office of the Director of Telecommunications Regulation); Barbara McDonald (Trinity College Dublin); Caitríona

Cannon (National Gallery of Ireland); Terry McDonald (Trinity College Dublin); Peter Gulding (Trinity College Dublin).

The group organised a very successful visit to the Chester Beatty Library at the end of April where we were provided with an excellent tour of the library's magnificent collection of Christian and Islamic manuscripts and Chinese, Japanese, Indian and other oriental art. The CIG group continues to maintain a website <http://www.heanet.ie/CIG/> and there are plans to publish a newsletter in both a print and web edition in the near future.

County and City Librarians' Section

CHAIR: Donal Brady (Waterford County Library)

VICE CHAIR: Breda Gleeson (Kildare County Library)

SECRETARY: Dolores Doyle (Limerick City Library)

TREASURER: Breda Gleeson (Kildare County Library)

The Annual General Meeting was held in Dungarvan on 24th November 2000.

During the year a most successful meeting was held with the Director and the two Assistant Directors of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. Issues of common interest were discussed at length. The Chairman of the Section welcomed the input and time from An Chomhairle and thanked all involved for such a successful meeting.

The County & City Librarians' Section has been to the forefront in endorsing and supporting the recommendations of the *Branching Out* Report. Central to this has been Internet training which was carried out on a regional basis with the support of every County/City Librarian. This was a most successful project which we hope will be continued in the future.

The Autumn Seminar took place in Dungarvan on 23-24 November. The theme of the seminar was Branching Out: Progress & Implications. The panel of speakers were excellent and included Donal Connolly and Michael Killeen, County Managers, Ian Keating, Principal Officer, Dept. of the

Environment, Norma McDermott, Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, Mike Neary, Director, Information Society Commission and Senan Cooke, Manager, Waterford Crystal. The papers delivered were inspiring and a visit to the new Dungarvan Branch Library was a visual treat.

In addition to members of the section being involved in special committees of *Branching Out* both Mary Reynolds and Fionnuala Hanrahan were nominated to the Schools Library Committee set up by the Department of Education.

Six librarians are also on the Librarians' Liaison Committee of the L.G.C.S.B. and Dolores Doyle has been nominated to the Shared Services Committee of the L.G.C.S.B.

Deirdre Ellis-King and Ruth Flanagan continue to serve as Ministerial Appointee Members of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna on the nomination of the association.

Government Libraries Section

Eight meetings took place in the year 2000, in addition to the AGM which was held on the 10th May 2000 in the Office of Public Works. The following Committee was elected at the AGM.

CHAIR: Carol Flynn – Dept. Ent. Trade & Employment

MINUTES SECRETARY: Nicola Maher – The Office of Public Works

CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY & PRO: Valerie Ingram – The Office of Public Works

TREASURER: Ruth O'Flaherty – Health & Safety Authority

COMMITTEE: Domitilla Zoldan, Joe Donnelly, Mary Doyle, Michael O'Gorman, Andrea Lydon

The most dominant issue throughout the year for the GSL was that of copyright legislation. Two members, Joe Donnelly from the Judges' Library and Mary Doyle from the Dept. of Agriculture and Food, led research into the matter and brought it to the attention of a much wider audience nationwide. Their research was used by other librarians outside the government sector, and amendments proposed by those librarians were accepted by the Minister during the Oireachtas

debates on the Copyright Bill. Later in the year the focus shifted to the implementation of the Act, including licensing arrangements for government departments and prescription of libraries under the Act. We have also been following developments in the draft E.U. Directive on copyright. J. Donnelly and M. Doyle were part of an L.A.I. group which met with the Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment to exchange information on the implementation process.

In March, Joe Donnelly from the Judges' Library was elected to the L.A.I. Executive Board. As a GLS representative he in turn provides feedback to the Section on general L.A.I. issues.

The Section was also actively involved in other areas. GLS members contributed to the Inter-Departmental Group on Metadata and Website Guidelines. CMOD later decided to appoint an Internet Information Specialist whose duties would include necessary research into metadata, and we were delighted to report that one of the requirements of this post was a qualification in Library and Information Studies.

A sub-committee of the Section continued to liaise with the Government Supplies Agency, Publications Section. Discussions included establishment of an electronic catalogue of publications, electronic ordering and payments, standing orders and the continued publication of bound volumes of Acts, Statutory Instruments, and Dáil and Seanad Debates. The GSA was very receptive to these ideas but is currently considering the whole area of how publications sales should be handled.

Health Sciences Libraries Section

CHAIR: Bernard Barrett, South Eastern Health Board Library, Kilkenny

SECRETARIES: Catherine Breslin, Sligo General Hospital; Tim Collins, NUI, Galway

TREASURER: Margaret Dillon, Regional Hospital Limerick

COMMITTEE: Anne M. O'Byrne, Dublin Dental Hospital; Tony

Linnane, Western Health Board; Fiona Morley, Cavan General Hospital.

Following a busy 1999 schedule there were fewer large-scale events which brought Section members together in 2000.

On March 29th Jackie Cahoon, Network Sales Executive, OVID Technologies, gave a presentation to members on OVID products – OVID are large suppliers of medical and health literature databases to Irish libraries. The presentation included a live demonstration of OVID online resources – databases, full-text journals and textbooks, in particular focusing on the integration of resources and on the features available from the web interface. The event was held at the Irish Nurses Organisation Professional Development Centre.

The Section AGM was held in the Library at the Headquarters of the Western Health Board, Merlin Park Regional Hospital, Galway on the 30th May. The meeting included presentation of Officers' Reports, discussion of the Section's Inter-Lending Co-operative and other matters. The views and concerns of the membership on many issues were noted for communication to and follow-up by the newly formed Healthcare Libraries Panel. There was a brief presentation by Brid McGrath, (Consultant Information Specialist) on information skills training of Health Board personnel. She informed the Section that, using special funding provided by the Department of Health & Children, training courses had been held for nursing staff in several Health Board Regions on the use of electronic information resources such as Medline, CINAHL and the Cochrane Library. Health Board librarians were urged to press that such training be extended to other professional groups within the health services. The AGM concluded with a tour of the new Western Health Board Library facility at Merlin Park, officially opened in January 2001 by Minister Micheal Martin.

Follow-up by Health Board librarians on the training item presented at the AGM was successful in securing a training day for Health

Board Library personnel – the first ever such event funded by the Department of Health & Children. The course, held on November 29th in the Midland Health Board Library at Tullamore General Hospital, was entitled "Training the Trainers" and was led by Dr Brid McGrath.

The Committee met on four occasions during the year to plan activities and undertake preparation of responses to various strategic initiatives. An e-mail discussion list was established to facilitate communication on Committee business. A letter prepared at Committee level was forwarded by the L.A.I. Secretary to the Department of Health & Children highlighting the concerns of the Section at the continuing delay in recruitment of a Department Librarian. This post is crucial to directing advances in the area of information for health in Ireland.

Individual Section members prepared responses to the Health Research Board's Strategy document *Making Knowledge Work for Health: Towards a Strategy for Research & Innovation for Health*, a consultation document published by the Health Research Board in January 2000. These submissions emphasised the vital role of library & information services and of information professionals in supporting the information needs of researchers in the biomedical field, in facilitating access to Web-based resources, creating information gateways etc.

The Committee also contributed to a submission forwarded via the Healthcare Libraries Panel to the Department of Health & Children on the National Health Information Strategy.

A number of Section members took advantage of attending the 8th International Congress on Medical Librarianship held in London in July. As this conference is held only every five years and had not been held in Europe since 1974 it afforded a unique opportunity to hear speakers from all over the world who represent the diversity of health librarianship on every continent. The Congress was attended by 1400 delegates, all of whom are involved in some aspect of information

service provision in health and medicine.

Gabrielle Doyle, Librarian at St Luke's Institute of Cancer Research, Dublin presented a poster at the 66th IFLA General Conference held in Jerusalem in August 2000. The theme of the Conference was Information for Co-operation and Gabrielle's poster was based on the Section's Inter-Lending Co-operative. It was entitled *A National Document Supply Co-operative among Healthcare Libraries in Ireland*.

Munster Regional Section

CHAIR: Virginia Conrick, Boole Library, UCC

VICE CHAIR: Dolores Casey, Cork City Library

SECRETARY: Catherine Kennedy, Tipperary Libraries

TREASURER: Catherine Clehane, Cope Foundation Library and Information Service, Cork

COMMITTEE: Mary Corcoran, Cork City Library; Niamh Cronin, Cork County Library; Marie Morgan, Cork City Library; Mary Foley, Boole Library, UCC; James Cashman, Fexco, Killorglin, Co. Kerry; Oragh Forde, Cork County Library; Grace Hooley, Cork County Library; Denis Murphy, Cork County Library; Ann Riordan, Cork City Library.

The Annual General Meeting of the Section was held in Cork City Library on 22nd of March 2000. Mr Pat McMahon, President of the Library Association of Ireland, addressed the meeting with the topic "Ensuring that the vocabulary of business does not invade the vocabulary of civic life: a look at performance indicators in libraries".

The section met on six occasions during 2,000 and organised three major events during the year.

On May 29th we visited Dungarvan Library, Waterford Crystal Visitors Centre and Dungarvan Arts Centre. This event was very well supported and we had numbers of approximately 60 on the day. The opportunity to visit Dungarvan Library was particularly popular and everybody was very impressed with the facilities there.



The former City Library building in Limerick where the Executive Board held its meeting of May 25th 2000. The building was constructed with the help of Carnegie funds in 1902.

On September 11th, the Section hosted its annual seminar in UCC. The seminar was entitled “The Information Society : Myth or Reality” and was attended by 50 delegates. Ms Norma McDermott, Director, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna opened the seminar with “Joining Forces: Issues and Returns”. Dr Lee Komito, Department of Library and Information Studies, UCD addressed the issue “The Information Revolution: Old Wine in New Bottles?”. Ms Susan O’Donnell, Models Research, gave us an insight into the “Digital Divide in Ireland”. Mr Noel Crowley, Clare County Librarian and Mr Anthony Edwards, Executive Librarian, Clare County Library, described “Information Technology: The Clare Approach”.

The five speakers each gave us a snap-shot of the Information Society from their different perspectives and it was a fascinating and highly informative day.

On Thursday, December 7th a Christmas Table Quiz was held in Cork. The Quiz was well attended and proceeds in excess of £300 were donated to charity.

As always, this Section encourages staff in public and academic libraries throughout the region to become involved in the Library Association of Ireland.

Western Regional Section

CHAIR: Petrina Mee, Health Library,

Merlin Park Hospital, Galway.

SECRETARY: Margaret Waldron, Library, GMIT, Dublin Road, Galway,

TREASURER: Siobhan Arkins, Galway County Library, Hynes Building, Galway.

The AGM of the Western Section was held on 7th March 2000 in the Board-Room of the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. The business of the meeting was followed by a presentation on the National Information Server [NIS] by Jenny Byrne, Information Manager/Webeditor for HEAnet, Ireland’s National Education and Research Network. The NIS web-site located at <http://www.heanet.ie/> is designed to function as a national electronic public archive for Irish academics and researchers; a convenient virtual library hosting, mirroring, or linking to resources relevant to the user group. Jenny outlined the developmental history of the NIS, the web-site design considerations that shape it, as well as plans for further development. We were given an overview of the range of information content and coverage on the NIS; databases accessible on the site, websites hosted there together with mirrored software that can be downloaded by users, and the links NIS maintains as speedy access routes to Irish, UK, and international sites.

The section made a visit to Marsh’s Library and the Chester Beatty Library in November.

We wish to acknowledge, with thanks, the help of the individual speakers, guides and fellow library workers of host institutions who helped us with our programme of activities during the year.

Rare Books Group

CHAIR: Charles Horton (Chester Beatty Library)

SECRETARY: Marie Boran (James Hardiman Library, NUI, Galway)

TREASURER: Joanna Finegan (National Library of Ireland)

COMMITTEE: Charles Benson (Trinity College Library), Helen Davis (Boole Library, UCC), Máire Kennedy (Gilbert Library), Muriel McCarthy (Marsh’s Library), Siobhan O’Rafferty (Royal Irish Academy Library), Sarah Preston (UCD), Valerie Seymour (Library, NUI, Maynooth).

The Group’s Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 26th January 2000 and once again we enjoyed the hospitality of Marsh’s Library. New officers elected to the committee were Charles Horton who took over as Chair and Marie Boran who became the new Secretary. Tributes were paid to Valerie Seymour and Sarah Preston, outgoing Chair and Secretary respectively, for their dedicated work to the Group. After the meeting the Group enjoyed a lecture by Charles Horton on the Chester Beatty Library’s collections and its move to Dublin Castle.

The first Book Collector’s Circle meeting of the year took place on 5th April 2000 when Dr. Brendan Grimes, author of *Irish Carnegie Libraries: a Catalogue and Architectural History*, gave an illustrated lecture on Carnegie libraries and their development.

We had a combined Book Collectors’ Circle and Visit on 15th June when the Chester Beatty Library hosted a visit by the Group. This included a presentation on the history and development of the Library and a tour of the Galleries. In addition the Group were able to view the manuscript of Ulysses and its related exhibition.

Dr. Máire Kennedy, of the Gilbert Library, spoke to our September Book Collectors’ Circle on “Rare,

Valuable, and Extensive Libraries: the book auction catalogues of Charles Sharpe at the Royal Irish Academy Library”.

In November the Group hosted its Annual Seminar entitled “Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: Saving Ireland’s Ephemera”. This proved to be a very full and interesting day with seven speakers. We were very pleased to have Dr. Martin Andrews from the Centre for Ephemera Studies at the University of Reading begin the proceedings. He outlined the work of the Centre and the type of material being collected as well as drawing our attention to new publications connected with the material there. Derval O’Carroll, of the Chester Beatty Library then spoke to us on Ephemera from Limerick’s Printing Past, including newspaper and other material connected with the Limerick Soviet. The Honorary Librarian from the Irish Railway Record Society, Tim Moriarty, provided an illustrated introduction to some of the holdings of that society’s library including rule books, working manuals and very evocative timetables and posters. The collection of political ephemera was the theme pursued by Gerard Long of the National Library of Ireland who provided an especially graphic account of the exigencies sometimes involved in the acquisition of posters and other election ephemera. The use of Ephemeral Collections in academic research was outlined by Prof. Patrick O’Flanagan from the Department of Geography at UCC. He indicated the way in which seemingly insignificant items such as calendars and lists of fairs and markets could be utilised by researchers to discover farming patterns and land use. Kieran Hoare, Archivist at the James Hardiman Library, Galway, provided an illustrated account of the theatrical ephemeral associated with Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe, the Irish language theatre. Programmes, posters, playbills and letters all combined to throw interesting light on the development of the theatre. Finally Brian Donnelly from the National Archives of Ireland presented a comprehensive account of the types of material accessioned in the Archives through the Business

Records Survey including those from workhouses, licensed premises and medical halls and the wide ranging insights this type of information provides.

Another exciting development for the Group was the creation of a dedicated Web Page by the Group's former Secretary, Sarah Preston. This site features details of our publications and forthcoming events. We hope it will be a welcome addition for members and others interested in rare books and related events. The website address is www.iolfree.ie/-rarebooks. Altogether the year was a successful one for the Group whose membership stands at over 120.

Youth Library Group

CHAIR: Aideen Griffin, Fingal County Libraries

SECRETARY: Phil Scanlan, Dublin Corporation Libraries

TREASURER: Helen Brennan, South Dublin Libraries

COMMITTEE: Anne Gannon, Dublin Corporation Libraries; Mary McLaughlin, Dublin Corporation Libraries; Mary Murphy, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna; Bernie Fennell, Fingal County Libraries; Pat O'Connor, Dublin Corporation Libraries

The committee met on six occasions during the year. The Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday 2nd March 2000 in Fingal County Library Headquarters, Parnell Square, Dublin, at which Mary Murphy, the children's author, spoke about her work.

Seminar

In light of the major changes in primary education introduced by the Revised Curriculum for Primary Schools, the Youth Library Group joined forces with the School Library Association (Republic of Ireland Branch) to organise a seminar entitled "The Primary Curriculum: Libraries and Schools Working Together". This was held in the Church of Ireland College of Education in Rathmines on Friday 31st March 2000. There was a capacity crowd of 115 delegates in attendance from

libraries and schools around the country. Aine Lawlor, the National Co-ordinator of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme, outlined the changes in the revised curriculum. She was followed by Eamonn Murtagh, a Department of Education District Inspector, who traced the development of the teaching of reading in schools, highlighting the significance of reading in the revised curriculum and the role of the school library. Geraldine O'Connor spoke about the use of varied resources and materials including old photographs, 'big books', wallcharts and artefacts in teaching history in the classroom. She suggested that school and public libraries may in the future be called upon to make such items available on loan. Delegates then had a choice of attending two out of four sessions, "Leabhair Ghaeilge do Dhaoine Oga" with Maire Uí Mhaicín, "Setting up a School Library" with Mary Fitzpatrick, "Let's Read Real Books" with Liz Morris and Gillian Perdue or "Ideas on Book Selection" with Anne McNeil. The day concluded with Bernadette McHugh, National Co-ordinator of the National Reading Initiative, speaking about the aims and objectives of the initiative. Due to the overwhelming interest in the seminar, it was decided to run it again, with a few adjustments, on Friday, 6th October, 2000.

E-Group

The YLG committee set up an E-group for people interested in Children's Reading/Literature called "YouthLibrariesIreland". There are currently 82 members.

Children's Book Festival 2000

Children's Book Festival took place between 16th October and 31st October. It was launched in the Hugh Lane Gallery on the 17th October by Damien McCaul from "The Den". This year the guide to children's books was renamed "Book Fest". Members of the YLG contributed reviews to it. The YLG committee undertook the distribution of packs, consisting of copies of "Book Fest", posters, stickers, bookmarks, balloons and tee-shirts, to the Library Authorities around the country. The packs are bought from Children's Book

Ireland, the main organisers of the festival. The committee received a loan from the L.A.I. to cover the cost of the packs. They are sold to the Library Authorities at a cost of £80 each. They were assembled in Charleville Mall Library and delivered around the country by the courier company Fasttrack. 31 of the 32 library authorities bought packs. Quantities ordered ranged from 10 to 1. A total of 101 were distributed. The committee posted details of events held around the country on the "YouthLibrariesIreland" E-group.

Ask an Author Project

The committee used the "YouthLibrariesIreland" E-group to set up this project to coincide with CBF. Nine Irish Children's writers joined the E-group: Gerard Whelan, Marita Conlon-McKenna, Siobhan Parkinson, Larry O'Loughlin, Aislinn O'Loughlin, Darren Shan, Marilyn Taylor, Don Conroy and Lucinda Jacobs. During October, children around the country could email questions to them about books and writing. Over 90 questions were received, mainly from schools and public libraries.

We hope to repeat this project next year including writers from other countries.

National Reading Initiative

The Library Association of Ireland welcomed the important decision by government and by the Department of Education and Science to set up a National Reading Initiative and a programme of linked events. Every library has a role to play in keeping books and reading central to our personal lives and to the lives of local communities, whether that community be a college campus or a small village. It was good to see so

many libraries throughout the country to participate in a variety of ways in the initiative. During the year every County Library was involved in organising events that fostered an understanding of the vital role of books, reading, libraries and literacy in society.

"Babies Love Books" is an important part of the National Reading Initiative established by the Minister for Education and Science to raise awareness among the general public of the importance of reading. The books are being stored in local libraries and will be given to parents when they bring their children to their local health centre for their 9-month check. The initiative was welcomed by the President of the Library Association when he spoke in Galway at the official launch of the Irish Language aspect of the "Babies Love Books" scheme, where he stressed the importance of developing the reading habit at a young age.

World Book Day

The Library Association of Ireland continues to encourage all libraries to celebrate World Book Day on April 23rd every year. UNESCO invites all libraries and librarians to pay a world-wide tribute to books and authors on this date, encouraging everyone, and in particular young people, to discover the pleasure of reading and gain a renewed respect for the irreplaceable contributions of those who have furthered the social and cultural progress of humanity. The idea for this celebration originated in Catalonia, in Spain, where on 23 April, Saint George's Day, books and roses are exchanged.



In December 2000 Nodlaig Hardiman retired as Divisional Librarian with Dublin Public Libraries after 46 years service. The contribution of Nodlaig Hardiman to the Library Association of Ireland has been immense. She was a member of the Executive Board for over 30 years, and was Honorary Secretary of the Association from 1972 to 1978. She served as President of the Association between 1986 and 1988. At events at home and overseas Nodlaig represented the Library Association of Ireland with distinction. She played a leading role in the development of professional library education in Ireland. All librarians are indebted to Nodlaig for her work in organising many annual conferences and for the several hundred meetings she facilitated. The Library Association of Ireland wishes Nodlaig a very happy retirement.