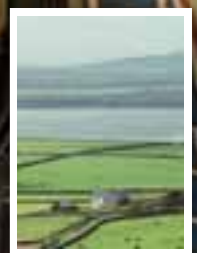


Inside:

**The Oireachtas Library
& Research Service**
Island Library Services

Conference Reports
Book Reviews





VOLUME 18: ISSUE 2

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CONTENTS

6-9

'Only Connect'

Address by President of the LAI, Siobhan Fitzpatrick, to Joint LAI/CILIP Ireland Conference

10-18

The Oireachtas Library & Research Service

Madelaine Dennison

19-25

Island Libraries

Jean Ricken and Jessica Bates

26-30

Lenus: from healing God to Health Repository

Aoife Lawton

31-37

Evaluation of usability of Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive

Senan Healy and Judith Wusteman

38-47

Conference Reports: Annual Joint Conference 2009 – Philip Cohen

EAHIL Workshop – Paul Murphy

NEWSPLAN seminar – Domitilla Fagan

Innovative Users' Group Conference 2009

– Niamh Walker-Headon

Book to Button: Transitions in Library Service Delivery

– Áine O'Connor

48-52

Books: Managing Electronic Records

Regionalism and the Reading Class

Renewing our Libraries

Going Beyond Google

Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library

Making the most of RFID in Libraries

56

News from the Stacks

Guidelines For Contributors

An Leabharlann: The Irish Library publishes articles on libraries, librarianship and other topics of interest to the library and information community on the island of Ireland. The Editorial Board invites original, unpublished articles for publication. Articles should be between 1,500 and 5,000 words. Occasionally, longer articles may be published.

Articles

Manuscripts will be reviewed by the Editorial Board.

Authors are asked to submit an informative abstract of not more than 200 words. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of statements and references in their articles.

Images which visually support the article are welcomed. Authors should also submit a photograph of themselves. Original photographs and/or high-resolution scans (300 dpi) would be most helpful.

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Manuscripts should be submitted by email attachment or on disc as Rich Text File (RTF). Text should be formatted in Times New Roman 12 pt., double-spaced, with margins of 2.54cm (i.e. standard A4 margins). Formatting of text (e.g. italics and bold) should be kept to a minimum.

Authors should provide their name, organization, position and the title of the article at the top of the first page. If the article was presented at a conference, details of the sponsoring organization, the date and title of the conference should be given.

Book reviews should include the full title, author or editor, publication details and price.

Conference reports should include details such as the sponsoring organization, the date, place and title of the conference.

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Microsoft Word and other word processing programs allow for a language to be selected. Please ensure that the language selected is either UK or Ireland English (i.e. NOT United States English).

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31 December 2009 for March 2010 issue

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Last December, the Government launched the document *Building Ireland's Smart Economy*. The Smart Economy is presented as a framework which will help to address Ireland's current economic difficulties and to look to improving the country for future generations. Central to the success of this approach will be information, ideas, innovation and infrastructure. The building blocks of ideas, innovation and information are found in abundance in all library types. Access to a range of material – print and electronic – is provided through varied collections in academic, public and special libraries. While some inventors may have had eureka moments in the bath, libraries provide opportunities for everyone to have moments of inspiration. Specific support for innovation, research and development is already publicly funded in our academic and research libraries.

The LAI President's Address to the annual Joint Conference notes that knowledge is based on the provision of focused information. Indeed, the provision of focused information in a timely fashion is central to the operation of all libraries. In her address to delegates at the EAHIL Workshop, Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney encouraged Health Librarians to be proactive, not to wait for things to happen. The Minister also noted that "Information is central to informing public opinion." In addition to knowledge management, institutional and organizational repositories are already helping libraries make their contribution to the smart economy.

Libraries have always been seen as the hallmark of a democracy. The development of the Library & Research Service of the Oireachtas is described in an article by Madelaine Dennison. The current focus of the service and future directions are outlined. The benefits of this library are not just for the elected Members. Rather, every citizen will benefit indirectly through the impact this service has on informed decision-making in the democratic process.

Aoife Lawton's article on Lenus: the Irish Health Repository gives the rationale for Institutional Repositories (IRs) and demonstrates the importance of this national resource. It also shows that librarians are acutely aware of the importance of retaining corporate knowledge and the intellectual capital that is contained in every institution. The author stresses the importance of the role of IRs in making publicly funded research available to the research community. Most public funding bodies have Open Access (OA) requirements. Some

conference reports also refer to Institutional Repositories in some of the academic institutions and the importance of OA mandates to ensure the success of the IR. Institutional Repositories will ensure that wheels are not re-invented. They allow for the sharing of knowledge and expertise and ensure that staff time is not needlessly wasted in duplicating research already undertaken.

Is it time that local authorities consider such an initiative? If this is not already being addressed, there are a number of local government managerial bodies through which it is surely possible. At the level of the broader public service, this has already been suggested in *Report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (An Bord Snip Nua)*.¹ This is based on an earlier suggestion in the OECD Report on the Irish Public Service.²



All libraries are operating in uncertain times. Book funds have already been cut, staff are not being replaced and new services which had been planned cannot be delivered. The length and extent of cuts is unknown.

Two articles are based on post-graduate research thesis research from the School of Information and Library Studies (SILS) at University College Dublin. One considers a very special type of public library provision- that of an island library service. The second deals with the usability of a digital management project – the Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive at the university.

The vibrancy of the library community is illustrated by the range and scope of conference reports. All reported conferences in this issue were held in Ireland. The long-established Annual Joint Conference underlines the co-operation between both parts of the island. So, too the report on the NEWSPLAN seminar which is a very practical and tangible example of co-operation. The EAHIL Workshop and the Innovative User's Group conference were both international but were held in Dublin.

Marjory Sliney, editor@libraryassociation.ie

1 *Report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes*. Dublin: Stationery Office, 2009.

2 *Ireland: towards an integrated public service*. Paris: OECD, 2008.

THIS IS THE 81ST YEAR of the Library Association of Ireland and it is for me a great honour to stand before you today as President of our association, an association which over the years has counted amongst its officers and its membership many distinguished Irish men and women. I think it would be appropriate here in Belfast to recollect that our association was founded in 1928 by a native of County Down, President of the Royal Irish Academy and one-time Librarian of the National Library of Ireland, Robert Lloyd Praeger, Ireland's pre-eminent naturalist. Praeger was equally at home in Belfast, Dublin, Clare Island, Co. Mayo, indeed *anywhere he went*. He was a scientist, librarian, author and scholar – a kind of Renaissance man. The ease with which he traversed the boundaries of counties and regions, and of the philosophical and cultural boundaries of the fields in which he engaged, provides us with a model which, although relating to a generation and a societal framework which has long been superseded, nonetheless has resonances for us in the digital information age and knowledge society/economy. Like our founding President, librarians on this island cross sectoral and cultural boundaries in their mission of creating, preserving and making information and knowledge available at local, national and international levels.



This paper will focus on information provision, knowledge creation and the role of co-operation in furthering the development of our society, reflecting on the fallout from these times of unprecedented change.

Change

Change is a given: it has always been thus, only the rate of change has accelerated. We, the products of the second half of the twentieth century, are more than aware of how much our work and domestic environments have changed and how rapidly developments in technology have rendered some technologies obsolete and marginalised others. Technology has made our work easier and, paradoxically, more complex. We have to be ultra-organised to keep up and to control the mass of communications and information that come our way on a daily basis. However, more information is not always good information. T.S. Eliot in his Choruses from 'The Rock' says, and

I extrapolate: 'Endless invention, endless experiment, Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness; Knowledge of speech, but not of silence; ... All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance, All our ignorance brings us nearer to death.... Where is the Life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?'¹ This is not to state that information of itself works against knowledge but that wisdom exposes us to the limitations of our knowledge. Focused information provision is essential to the building of knowledge which in turn permits us to make informed and hopefully wise decisions. Yesterday, it was heartening to hear Paul Sweeney, who opened our conference on behalf of NI Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), also referring (in the context of libraries and information provision) to the concept of wisdom and the need for enlightened leadership.

'Focused information provision is essential to the building of knowledge...'

Information Society/Knowledge Society

Government policies and attendant strategies have been driven by the idea of an information society and, latterly, a knowledge society.

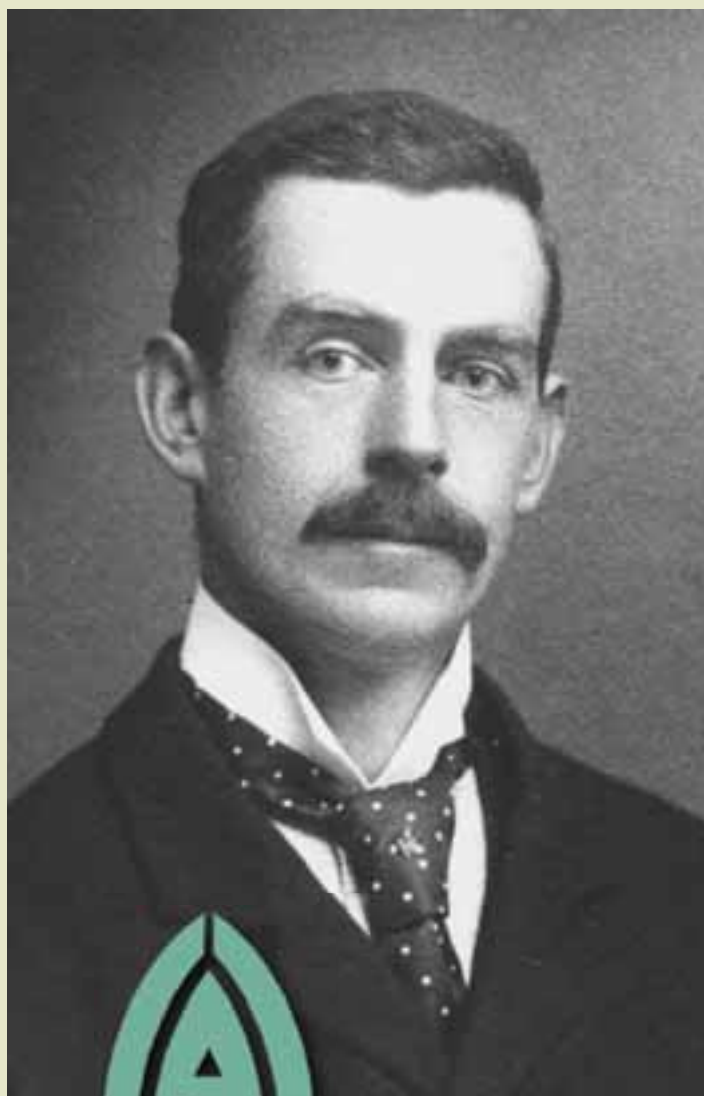
The Information Society Commission's report *Building the knowledge society* specifically connected the knowledge society and the global economy 'the emergence of the knowledge society, building on the pervasive influence of modern information and communication technologies, is bringing about a fundamental reshaping of the global economy'.² It continues 'Knowledge has always been a factor of production and a driver of economic and social development... However, the capacity to manipulate, store and transmit large quantities of information cheaply has increased at a staggering rate over recent years. The digitisation of information and the associated pervasiveness of the internet are facilitating a new intensity in

‘Only connect’

Address by Siobhán Fitzpatrick, President, Library Association of Ireland
to the Joint Library Association of Ireland/CILIP Ireland Conference,
Belfast, April 2009

the application of knowledge to economic activity, to the extent that it has become the predominant factor in the creation of wealth. As much as 70 to 80 per cent of economic growth is now said to be due to new and better knowledge.... In an increasingly global economy, where knowledge about how to excel competitively and information about who excels are both more readily available, the effective creation, use and dissemination of knowledge is increasingly the key to success, and thus to sustainable economic and social development that benefits us all.... A... feature of the knowledge economy [is] that it increasingly relies on the diffusion and use of information and knowledge, as well as its creation. The success of enterprises, and of national economies, becomes increasingly dependent on the information infrastructure that is necessary for the gathering and utilisation of knowledge.... Knowledge has become the key resource. Knowledge has value, but so too does knowledge about knowledge’. The document goes on to predict that ‘Workers at all levels in the 21st-century knowledge society will need to be lifelong learners, adapting continuously to changed opportunities, work practices, business models and forms of economic and social organisation. In this changing environment, holding the status quo is not an option’.³

No one here needs reminding that the environment is changing – changing rapidly and in ways that we could not have predicted, with outcomes of which we cannot be sure. Uncertainty prevails and we cannot know which, if any, of the policies planned for the future will be implemented. However, in times of real uncertainty, leadership is required and it is important that the policies and ideals which underpin our strategy documents are kept to the fore, to guide us through these perilous times. Michael Casey (former Chief Economist, Central Bank of Ireland, and former board member of IMF) recently wrote in an *Irish Times* article on NAMA, the proposed National Asset Management Agency: ‘There is no such thing as perfect information but good leadership should aim at reducing uncertainty as much as possible to help get the economy going again’.⁴



**Robert Lloyd Praeger, founding
President of the Library
Association of Ireland, a President
of the Royal Irish Academy and
one-time Librarian of the
National Library of Ireland**

- 1 T.S.Eliot, ‘Choruses from “The Rock”: Chorus 1’ in *Selected poems*. London: 1973 ed.
- 2 Information Society Commission (2002), *Building the Knowledge society: report to government*. Dublin: Information Society Commission.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Casey, M. (2009), ‘NAMA is a blank cheque which could work well or end in disaster’, *Irish Times*, 16 April.

'In times of drastic change, it is the learners who inherit the future'.⁵ A very essential theme for our times is that of lifelong learning. It seems to me to be more pertinent than ever, as professionals and other workers face voluntary or involuntary retraining, redundancy or retirement. The theme of lifelong learning referred to in the *Knowledge Society* report is one that also features strongly in *Branching out: future directions* 'In line with the life cycle approach identified in *Towards 2016*, the Steering Group recommends that the role of the public library service in lifelong learning be expanded and that library authorities seek to have that role recognised by education providers and other agencies'.⁶ The Northern Irish document *Delivering tomorrow's libraries: principles and priorities for the development of public libraries in Northern Ireland*⁷ also points to the libraries' role in this area 'Their ability to promote and facilitate lifelong learning is especially significant for those who may have missed out on education opportunities, or who are uncomfortable in formal learning situations'.

Library Cooperation

Library authorities throughout the island have made strenuous efforts to increase the level of ICT provision, information literacy and training. The strategies for both north and south build on this. Further, *Branching out* recommends that 'public libraries position themselves as community focal points and gateways for and to local authority, central government and cultural services'. The development of co-operatively driven facilities such as borrowbooks.ie and portals such as askaboutireland.ie, as well as ensuring access to electronic resources e.g. *The Irish Times* online and Griffith's Valuation, are part of this process of creating library/information environments for researchers and lifelong learners. Building on these developments will be necessary for the provision of information and knowledge resources to an increasingly diverse clientèle which will include people with vastly varying levels of educational achievement, IT and learning skills. In order to create the optimum learning opportunities for our people, there will be a demand to provide access to information and resources across the sectors. This is already being addressed here by the cross-sectoral INSPIRE programme, a managed access scheme which began in the Foyle region and has since 2008 been mainstreamed across Northern Ireland. It is being replicated in the south by two co-operatively managed access initiatives, Pathways to Learning (PALs). These are being piloted concurrently: one on a regional basis, Cork PAL, which includes UCC, Cork IT, Cork City and County Library services, health libraries *inter alia*; and the second takes a thematic approach,

Music PAL, headed up by Trinity College Library, which includes the National Library of Ireland, the Royal Irish Academy, DIT, Cork City Library Service, and about two dozen music library services of all sizes and scopes. If these initiatives work well, the intent is to mainstream them across the country. Some of us attended a Music PAL seminar and workshop on 27 April in Dublin. It fair to say that it was really inspiring. Music librarians from the four corners of Ireland came together to consult, and in a spirit of fellowship, to develop ways to make their resources more visible and more accessible to the public.

A further initiative, partly occasioned by the PALs, is the extension of the Northern Ireland RASCAL database to the south. RASCAL records special collections and research collections across libraries, archives and museums. Under the aegis of COLICO (the Committee for Library Co-operation in Ireland), it will initially be used to record music holdings of the Music PAL libraries. CONUL (the Consortium of National & University Libraries) has already run a pilot whereby records have been tested and input by TCD, UCD, the National Library of Ireland and the Royal Irish Academy.

Other inspiring and imaginative co-operative endeavours which benefit user communities are the Taobh Tíre project in Donegal which engages with a range of partners to deliver services to dispersed communities in rural Donegal. Two cross-border collaborative projects have been the 'Books across the border' project (Newry and Dundalk libraries) and the multi-faceted, 'Inspiring readers' project between the Western Education & Library Board and Donegal (WELB). A third project, a mobile library service operated jointly by the WELB and Donegal, has been mainstreamed and is now a permanent feature of the service to customers in the north-west.

Our academic libraries are actively engaged in providing resources for a wide-ranging customer base from undergraduates to fourth-level, to staff, distance learners, lifelong learners, and increasingly, to more diverse user groups. In the south, the university libraries have joined forces to ensure the provision of electronic resources for the knowledge economy and all areas of research by means of the Irish Research electronic Library (IRel) consortium, which is co-funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Science Foundation Ireland (SFI). Funding will be due for renewal in 2010 and the Irish University Association librarians are working towards garnering the multi-million euro funding necessary to fund the resource which is essential for the continuity of research at all levels.

5 Hoffer, E.

6 HEAnet (2009), *Highlighting the future*. Dublin: HEA.

7 Ireland (2008), *Branching out: future directions*. Dublin: Stationery Office.

Also at a research level, in the area of digital creation, the academic libraries in the south, with participation from Queens University Belfast and the University of Ulster, are working together in the Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS) project. This is a massive consortial undertaking, funded under the HEA's Programme for Research in Third-level Institutions Cycle IV. Collections in our libraries can be seen as a form of intellectual capital, whose digital outputs support lifelong learning, creative industries, research theses, publications and a plethora of other potential outputs. The value of this type of content is recognised by HEAnet, Ireland's National Education & Research Network, which provides internet services to all of the HEA-funded bodies, i.e. the universities, institutes of technology, colleges of higher education, the Economic and Social Research Institute, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, the Royal Irish Academy, the Health Services Executive

These co-operative endeavours enable users by providing information, enabling access and facilitating research. They are integral to our work. I cannot improve the statement in the Centre for Cross Border Studies' briefing document, *Public sector co-operation on the island of Ireland: Public libraries*⁹

Librarianship is a profession which is both highly service-orientated and intensely pragmatic – co-operation and interaction are involved because they benefit the service to users, and because problems which are shared are more readily resolved.

Strategic partnerships, co-operation and collaboration must continue to be advocated by libraries as we seek to maximise resources and achieve efficiencies on scaled down budgets. The sense of mission and the democracy of our services are, like our

'Collections in our libraries can be seen as a form of intellectual capital...'

etc. It also provides these services to primary and post-primary schools via the Department of Education and Science. HEAnet's strategic plan, *Highlighting the future* states: 'HEAnet recognises that the nature of technology is changing and that it is not the network itself which enables learning and research but rather the data that moves along it'.⁸

All sectors public, university and special throughout the island have participated in various co-operative activities, many of which, such as the PAL programmes already described, have been initiated by COLICO (the Committee for Library Co-operation in Ireland). The Newsplan project is so mainstreamed at this stage that few of us remember a time when it didn't exist. The Irish Joint Fiction Reserve, a resource managed by COLICO, with the co-operation of library authorities north and south, together with some of the special and university libraries, is an under-publicised resource which deserves to be better known.

At the level of staff training and CPD, I would highlight the work of Academic & National Library Training Co-operative (ANLTC) in the academic libraries north and south and the cross-sectoral training workshops, seminars and conferences run by the groups and sections of the Library Association of Ireland. Our annual joint conference is a further example of the benefits of co-operation and networking, as is the now annual COLICO lecture at this conference.

library association symbol, a beacon of light in these uncertain times. Let us continue to work together for the benefit of our users, the provision of information, knowledge and the facilities and spaces in which to grow and to learn, in the knowledge that 'Knowledge is an unending adventure at the edge of uncertainty'.¹⁰

Siobhán Fitzpatrick BA, HDipEd, DipLIS, is President, Library Association of Ireland and Librarian, Royal Irish Academy.

8 HEAnet (2009), *op. cit.*

9 Centre for Cross Border Studies (2008), *Public sector co-operation on the island of Ireland: Public libraries*. Armagh: Centre for Cross Border Studies.

10 Bronowski, J.



The Oireachtas Library & Research Service: serving parliament from 1924 to date



Madeline Dennison

Photos: librarians, researchers and information assistants in the Library & Research Service, Houses of the Oireachtas

'...the essence of a Parliamentary library is that it should be up to date...I should say that what we require are Parliamentary papers, census returns and statistics, rather than a library of books....'¹

THE ABOVE QUOTE from Deputy Cooper, speaking about the Oireachtas Library during a Dáil debate in 1925, highlights the parliamentarian's requirement for current information, the facts and authoritative sources. Over eighty years later parliamentarians use the accurate and impartial information and research obtained from the Oireachtas Library & Research Service (L&RS) to support them in their parliamentary duties. Generally, parliamentarians use L&RS information and research to inform speeches in the Dáil and Seanad; the scrutiny and debate of legislation; the development of policy and media appearances/contributions. A parliamentary library can support parliamentary oversight of the executive, which has the resources of government departments at its disposal, by providing all parliamentarians with equal access to information and research.

The Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas undertook an international benchmarking review of staffing and Members' services in the parliament ahead of the establishment of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission in 2003. One of the findings of this review² was

'Library and Research Services are one of the main areas for development in the Office [of the Houses of the Oireachtas]...International benchmark evidence provides a clear case for the improvement of the library and research service available to the Houses of the Oireachtas and its committees.'³

The report's finding with regard to library and research services was a catalyst for the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission's decision to invest in the Oireachtas Library and particularly in research services for Deputies and Senators. In November 2005 I was appointed to the newly-created post of Head of Library and Research Services in the Houses of the Oireachtas. My brief was to establish a parliamentary research service and to significantly expand parliamentary library and information services.

This article is developed from a paper presented at the LAI/CILIP Ireland Annual Conference 2009, entitled 'Serving Parliament: establishing a research service for parliamentarians'. The article outlines

the establishment of the Oireachtas Library in 1924, its status at the end of the 20th century, the development of Member-centred information and research services during 2006 – 2009 and future challenges. To provide context some background information about the Houses of the Oireachtas follows.

Houses of the Oireachtas

The Houses of the Oireachtas, the Irish parliament, is bicameral comprising Dáil Éireann (lower house) and Seanad Éireann (upper house). There are currently nineteen Committees. There are 226 parliamentarians or Members (166 Deputies and 60 Senators) and these Members employ approximately 300 political staff. In addition there are approximately 400 civil service staff working in the Houses of the Oireachtas.



The Houses of the Oireachtas Commission is responsible for the running of the Houses of the Oireachtas and the management of the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas. The Commission has eleven Members and is chaired by the Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson of Dáil Éireann). The Secretary General, who is also the Clerk of the Dáil, is the chief executive of the Commission and has responsibility for managing the Office and implementing Commission policies.⁴ The Secretary General is

supported by four Directorates: Seanad, Library and Research; House Services; Committees, Information and Communications; Corporate and Members Services. Further information about the Houses of the Oireachtas is available on the parliament's website.⁵

The vision for the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission presented in the 2007-2009 Strategic Plan is 'excellent service – enabling a world-class parliament'. This strategic plan highlights ▶

Abstract

The Oireachtas Library & Research Service supports the work of both Houses of the Oireachtas, committees and individual members in respect of their parliamentary duties. Parliamentarians require information and research services that are impartial, objective and timely. The Oireachtas Library was established in 1924. By the end of the 20th century, due primarily to under-resourcing, it had fallen considerably behind other parliamentary libraries. This article provides an overview of the Oireachtas Library 1924-2005 and outlines the establishment of integrated research and library services for parliament, 2006-2009.

Keywords: Parliamentary Libraries, Ireland; Parliamentary library and research services

- 1 Dáil Debates, 28 May 1925, Volume 11, Committee on Finance – Estimates for Public Services – Vote 2.
- 2 Deloitte & Touche, *Houses of the Oireachtas – International Benchmarking Review, 2002*, Internal report.
- 3 Deloitte & Touche, *Houses of the Oireachtas – International Benchmarking Review, 2002*, Internal report.
- 4 Houses of the Oireachtas Commission (2007), *Strategic Plan 2007-2009*: 4.
- 5 Houses of the Oireachtas website www.oireachtas.ie Most of the corporate information is located under the 'Houses Commission' heading.

four key objectives – serving sittings, serving members, promoting parliament, delivering better management. It is important that the Oireachtas Library & Research Service visibly supports the Office’s vision and strategic objectives.

The Oireachtas Library 1924 – 2005

After the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922 the Government secured a part of Leinster House for parliamentary use. The Oireachtas Library was established in 1924 when the entire building was acquired by the State. The parliamentary library was provided with staff, collections and accommodation.

The first librarian was Mr Henry Egan Kenny who had been the librarian in the Chief Secretary’s Office in Dublin Castle. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was ‘the effective head of the executive in Ireland’.⁶ Alderman Thomas Kelly, the politician, Dublin city councillor and book dealer, was the assistant librarian in the early years of the new parliamentary library.⁷ The staffing structure of one librarian, assistant librarian and clerical assistant remained for the next fifty years. The following is a list of the Oireachtas librarians from 1924 to 2005

Henry Egan Kenny, 1924 – 1936
 Simon O’Connor, 1938 – 1952
 Sean Mac Crosáin, 1952 – 1958
 Liam Carberry, 1958 – 1987
 Maura Corcoran, 1987 – 2005 (*subsequently Head of Library until retirement in 2008*).

On the change of administrations the Oireachtas Library inherited the Library of the Chief Secretary’s Office; this collection pre-dates the foundation of the State and therefore has a thirty-two county relevance. The Oireachtas Library also received some materials including pamphlets from the Irish Office in London. The Irish Office was established in 1801 ‘to facilitate the flow of correspondence between Dublin and London...it was used by the Chief Secretary for Ireland to transact his business while in London for the parliamentary session’.⁸ A number of special collections and individual items relating to Ireland were purchased for the new library during the 1920s.

The Oireachtas Library was housed in a room in Leinster House which had originally been designed as a Supper Room by the architect Isaac Ware circa 1759. The architectural features of the room include the bow front (it is considered to be the earliest example of a bow front in Dublin), chimneypieces and the ceiling design. Further to the purchase of Leinster House by the Dublin Society (now Royal Dublin Society) in 1815 the room had been used as a Conversation Room. In the 1920s this room was transformed into a library/reading room with the installation of high mahogany bookcases, an enquiry desk which closed off the central apse and long mahogany reading tables of Edwardian styling for Members’ use. The room was refurbished in 2005 by the Office of Public Works with the dual aim of improving the working conditions for Members and library staff and restoring the room to its 1759 glory.

Some Members had definite ideas about the role/collections of the parliamentary library, in 1925 Deputy Cooper said

‘I do not think the Castle Library will meet our needs. Presumably, there have been no additions to the Castle Library since 1921 ...We took over Leinster House nearly six months ago, and the delay that has occurred has been a very great handicap on private Deputies, as compared with Ministers. A Minister can send his private secretary to the National Library or elsewhere in search of the material he requires, but a private Deputy has to do his own research work, and he is labouring under immense difficulties at present...the responsibility [of developing the library] should not be left solely on the Ceann Comhairle. He should be assisted by a Library Committee, representing all Parties...’.⁹

In 1926 a Joint Library Committee (JLC) of the Dáil and Seanad was established to advise the Ceann Comhairle and the Cathaoirleach (Chairperson of Seanad Éireann) on the development of the library. At its first meeting on 19th May 1926 rules for the conduct of the library were approved and it was agreed ‘that purchases of books should be restricted to works of Parliamentary interest or utility’.¹⁰ This decision reflected correspondence earlier that year between the Clerk of the Dáil and the Minister for Finance.

Most of the meetings of the Joint Library Committee were devoted to acquisition matters; however, the budget was limited. In 1929 the Committee received a communication from the Department of Finance ‘suggesting that in view of the need for utmost economy in State expenditure that [news]papers of a local interest should not be purchased for the Library.’¹¹ In 1933 ‘it was pointed out to the Committee that out of the total vote of ▶

6 *A New Dictionary of Irish History from 1800*, D.J. Hickey, J.E. Doherty, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2003: 58.

7 Dáil Debates, 28 May 1925, Volume 11, Committee on Finance – Estimates for Public Services – Vote 2 – Oireachtas.

8 DJ Hickey, *op. cit*: 230.

9 Dáil Debates, 28 May 1925, 11, Committee on Finance – Estimates for Public Services – Vote 2.

10 Joint Library Committee minutes, 19 May 1926.

11 Joint Library Committee minutes, 13 March 1929.



Members' Reading Room



Chimneypiece detail

£130 for the purchase of books, newspapers and periodicals for the Library £60 was absorbed in subscriptions for periodical publications and £50 for newspapers.’¹²

Proposed donations were considered by the Joint Library Committee. One interesting offer came from the Library of the Soviet Union, Moscow in 1929. The proposal was to exchange their publications for Oireachtas publications. In this instance

‘It was decided that as the documents might possibly be of a political or propagandist nature the Committee would not undertake to make a definite recommendation in the matter; but suggested that the matter be dealt with by the Ceann

‘... provide parliamentarians with access to an integrated continuum of library, information and research services’

Comhairle after, if deemed advisable, consultation with the Minister for External Affairs’.¹³

The Committee also dealt with complaints. For example in 1928 the Committee considered

‘certain complaints which had been received concerning the annoyance caused to Members using the Library by the introduction of visitors during sittings of either House...Whilst the Committee was aware of the lack of accommodation for members desiring to interview constituents it was considered nevertheless that an effort should be made to restrict the resort of visitors to the Library’.¹⁴

In 1983, the functions of the Joint Library Committee were taken over by the Joint Services Committee (JSC), which had a much broader remit. The JSC was charged with reviewing the Oireachtas Library in 1993 and found that the Library had fallen considerably behind other parliamentary libraries. This was due primarily to chronic under-resourcing, a lack of strategic planning and the ‘perception of the Library as a reactive provider of information rather than being an active information service geared to anticipating Members needs and initiating the provision of information.’¹⁵ The JSC commented on the library’s resources, services and collections

‘...the Library has been starved of resources over a long period. Only very modest changes have been made to the Library over the past seventy years and the Library has been unable to keep pace with developments in libraries in other parliaments...the present Oireachtas Library not alone compares extremely unfavourably with the facilities on

offer in all EU parliaments but falls seriously short of providing the minimum service which Members of the Oireachtas have a right to expect’.¹⁶

The JSC also noted

‘with serious concern the condition of some of the material currently stored in the basement [i.e. the collections inherited from the Chief Secretary’s Office, Irish Office and early acquisitions]...The Committee is adamant that the present situation must not be allowed continue and should any permanent damage befall this collection the Oireachtas will have failed in its responsibility as a trustee for the nation in protecting the material.’¹⁷

At the time of the JSC report in 1993 the Oireachtas Library had a permanent staff of nine to serve 226 Deputies and Senators. In contrast the House of Commons Library had a permanent staff of 205 to serve 651 Members of Parliament. The House of Lords had its own library.

There had been some positive staff-related developments over the years. For example it was agreed from 1971 onwards that newly-appointed assistant librarians (with subject specialisms) should be honours graduates recruited by way of open competition. Two assistant librarian posts were established in 1976 to provide a research service to Members. Key developments further to the JSC report were the general computerisation of the library, the purchase and implementation of an online catalogue in 1994 and the recruitment of the first assistant librarian with a professional qualification in librarianship to the Oireachtas Library at the same time.

Notwithstanding these ad hoc developments there was no sustained investment in the parliamentary library during the years that followed the JSC report.

Oireachtas Library & Research Service 2006 – 2009

There are a number of different models for delivering parliamentary library and research services; the model selected depends on the historical context and the political and cultural environment. The model selected for the ‘new’ Oireachtas Library & Research Service is a parliamentary library proper i.e. it forms an integral part of the overall support services of the parliament and is provided for by parliament. *The World Directory of National Parliamentary Libraries*¹⁸ classifies parliamentary libraries into three categories: parliamentary libraries proper, hybrid parliamentary libraries and contractual parliamentary libraries.

In addition to the establishment of a parliamentary library proper it was decided that the Oireachtas library and research services should be integrated rather than managed/delivered separately as is the case in some parliaments. There was concern about creating a situation where the existing, under-resourced library would have to compete against a new research service to secure adequate financial and staff resources. There was also concern about creating a situation

where there would be duplication of staff effort (and costs) to deliver Members' services. The aim was to provide parliamentarians with access to an integrated continuum of library, information and research services.

There were also internal discussions about the merits of a centralised research service compared to party-based research. A former Head of Research in the Australian Parliament cautions

'Remember...the inevitable suspicion and scepticism about a research service that will exist in some quarters at the outset. There will always be doubts that an independent group of researchers, working to all members of parliament, can and will provide impartial and confidential advice that members can rely on...The counter argument is that party-based research remains party based research...it is unlikely to be objective and most likely to put only one side of the case.'¹⁹

The key developments in the Oireachtas Library & Research Service, 2006–2009, were:

1. creation of a new L&RS management structure;
2. development of L&RS vision and strategy;
3. recruitment of twenty researchers and four librarians with diverse professional backgrounds;
4. introduction of a new range of proactive information and research services including legislative and economic analysis services which are available to all Members;
5. introduction of enhanced, on demand, research services for individual Members including the writing of analytical research papers in response to their queries;
6. introduction of specific research services for Committees;
7. implementation of a new collection management system and digital repository;
8. upgrading of the contemporary subject collections (for Members/those undertaking research on their behalf) with an emphasis on electronic resources;

‘... development of relevant, accessible collections which are fit for a 21st century parliament.

Two Oireachtas Library & Research Service (L&RS) strategic plans (2006–2007, 2008–2009) which were closely aligned to the parliament's strategic plan provided the framework for the development of the service.

During 2006–2007 the priorities were the recruitment of researchers and the introduction of a portfolio of member-centred information and research services/products. During these years a higher priority was given to the development and delivery of new research services than to reorganising the collections. This approach supported the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission's emphasis on research services. It was hoped that the prioritisation of research-related over collections-related initiatives would result in a more immediate and visible impact on Members. While the collections were upgraded (particularly the electronic resources) to support the new researchers in their work, and an initial collection development policy was developed (the library's first written policy) the wider collections-related issues were not addressed until 2008–2009. While the development of research services continued during 2008–2009 the priority during these years is the development of relevant, accessible collections which are fit for a 21st century parliament.

9. reorganisation, cataloguing, selected digitisation and preservation of the historical collections; and
10. restoration and refurbishment of the Members' Reading Room.

The developments in the areas of staffing, research services and collections are outlined below.

1. Staffing

There were twelve staff in the Oireachtas Library in 2005; that number has trebled over the last four years. Two key management posts (Head of Research and Head of Collections) were filled in 2006 and 2008 respectively.

Librarians were recruited to fill vacancies as they arose; there are five librarian posts in the L&RS. The recently recruited librarians have considerable corporate, public and academic library experience. Two librarians currently have responsibilities for information services, with one librarian assigned to each of collection management, cataloguing and electronic systems administration.

12 Joint Library Committee minutes, 19 July 1933.

13 Joint Library Committee minutes, 27 November 1929.

14 Joint Library Committee minutes, 19 July 1928.

15 Joint Services Committee, *Report on the Oireachtas Library Facilities*, February 1994, p.2, Internal report.

16 *ibid*, p.1.

17 *ibid*, p.3.

18 Kohl, Ernst, *The world directory of national parliamentary libraries*, 6th edition, Bonn: Deutscher Bundestag, 1996. Accessed 10 July 2009. <http://webarchiv.bundestag.de/archive/2006/0706/wissen/bibliothek/library/intro.html>

19 Verrier, J R (2000) 'How to establish a parliamentary research service: does one size fit all?' in Verrier, J R et al, *The theory and practice of developing parliamentary research and information services: the experience of the Parliament of Australia*, p.32, Department of Parliamentary Services Parliamentary Library, Parliament of Australia.

Twenty researchers were recruited including economists, lawyers and social scientists with considerable research and work experience gained in both the public and private sectors. Specialists (in areas such as health, transport, education for example) were not recruited primarily because of a need for flexibility. Researchers need to be able to undertake research within broad subject parameters. Of course in practice many of the researchers do have a research specialism. One of the researchers is a qualified librarian. There are three subject-based research teams (law; economics & environmental science; social



science, politics & parliamentary affairs) and also two teams organised via service lines (Reading Room; Committees). Most of the teams are interdisciplinary.

There are eight support staff (information assistants) working in Reading Room and collection management teams.

It is essential that all L&tRS staff demonstrate integrity, impartiality and accuracy in presenting information. L&tRS staff also require the ability to work to tight deadlines in what can be a pressurised environment. As part of an L&tRS professional development programme lively knowledge sharing meetings which are open to all L&tRS staff are held regularly with a combined research/collections agenda.

Most L&tRS staff are situated in an office block close to Leinster House; librarians, researchers and information assistants are co-located. The Reading Room team (one librarian, three information assistants) is based in the Reading Room in Leinster House. The Reading Room is staffed from 9.45am until 6pm on non-sitting days (generally Mondays and Fridays). On sitting days (generally Tuesdays – Thursdays) the Reading Room must be staffed until the Houses rise, this means a couple of L&tRS staff are required to work late into the evening on a couple of days per week and to work well into the night on a fairly regular basis. For example in July 2009 staff were required to work until 2.30am while the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Bill 2009 was debated. On occasion there is a requirement to staff the Reading Room

through the night, this happened most recently in October 2008 when the Dáil and Seanad debates on the Credit Institutions (Financial Support) Bill 2008 continued until 8am.

2. Development of a portfolio of innovative research products

William Robinson, a Senior Specialist in the U.S. Congressional Research Service, has outlined various ways in which legislative research and information help create sound decision-making and a more vibrant democracy.²⁰ Legislative research can improve decision-making on specific policy issues faced by the legislature i.e. evidence based policy making; research can help improve the institutional dynamics within the legislature (the debates are focused on differences in values rather than on differences in facts); the use of high-quality information by the legislature can add to the perceived legitimacy of its actions by citizens.

Similar to most libraries the L&tRS provides access to information resources which are increasingly electronic, provides information skills training, loans print materials and provides document delivery services.

In addition the L&tRS researchers write analytical research papers on an on demand basis for individual Members and Committees. These research papers must be impartial, balanced and objective. L&tRS researchers have the ability to cover all aspects of an argument in a non-partisan way and present their research in a format (written or orally) easily assimilated by Members. Information and research services for Members are provided on a 'first come first served' basis.

A protocol has been developed by the L&tRS with the Committee Secretariat to provide a framework for the management and delivery of a range of information and research services to Committees.

The JSC 1993 report was critical of the lack of proactive services; a range of such services is now provided. While the L&tRS tries to anticipate Member's information requirements it does not have a role in setting an agenda and, therefore, the proactive products are linked to the legislative programme, the work programmes of Committees and trends noted from the on demand research service. The proactive services comprise regular analyses of legislative, economic and social issues.

For example, the Legislative Analysis Service compiles Debate Packs and Bill Digests. This service aims to provide Members with an accurate, impartial and balanced briefing in time for the Second Stage debate. Debate Packs are professionally presented information packs of carefully selected (in terms of content, credible/authoritative sources, balance etc) and edited secondary sources on the Bill. Each Bill Digest is an analysis of the principal themes of a bill (rather than a section-by-section analysis); the L&tRS is aiming to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to the Digests.

The Legislative Analysis Service has been well received by Members but it can be a challenging product to deliver as

highlighted in the following extract from the minutes of a recent meeting of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission

'Members welcomed the enhanced research and information services now available from the L&RS, particularly the legislative analysis service such as the Debates Packs and the Bills Digests, but observed that in some instances these papers are circulated very close to the commencement of the debate on the Bill therefore giving members very little time to consider the briefing material. The Commission was informed that notification of scheduling of legislation is a matter for the whips and consequently the short notification timeframe causes pressure for the turnaround of Bills analysis papers, particularly on complex legislation'.²¹

In January 2009 the L&RS published Dáil Constituency Profiles for each of the 43 electoral areas in Ireland on the parliament's website. These Profiles are a new proactive research product. This was the first time that an L&RS product had been made available to both the Members and the public. Using information from the most recent census in 2006, the profiles brought together a range of social, economic and political data for each constituency in one accessible document. The L&RS designed the profiles to assist Members in understanding the needs of constituents, for example, in terms of transport and social welfare services; identifying the gaps in service provision in each constituency and what type of resources might be needed; planning for future service provision such as projecting the demand for schools, childcare places and healthcare.

The L&RS plans to make some of its other proactive products available to the public via the parliament's website by the end of 2009.

3. Development of collections fit for a 21st century parliament

The L&RS collections are outlined here under four broad headings: contemporary, Documents Laid before the Houses, Oireachtas publications and historical.

The contemporary subject collection has a broad focus as it must meet Members' wide-ranging information/research needs.

'The range of issues upon which a modern parliamentarian is expected to have at least some information, in many cases a deep knowledge, is far more complex than would be faced by a managing director or executive in a company or a professor in a university'.²²

Key collecting areas are economics, law, social sciences and Irish history and politics, although the L&RS is not aiming to

build comprehensive collections in these areas. There is an emphasis on electronic resources primarily because of the need for range and currency but also because there will be no additional space available for print collections in the foreseeable future. The contemporary subject collection has been significantly upgraded since 2006 to meet the needs of Members and those undertaking research on their behalf including L&RS staff and Parliamentary Assistants who are employed by Members.

The Documents Laid collection (approximately 70,000 items) results from the laying of documents (typically by government departments and agencies) before the Houses(s); this is a formal procedure regulated by statute, the constitution and the standing orders of the Houses. The relevant statute is the *Houses of the Oireachtas (Laying of Documents) Act, 1966*; however documents have been laid since the foundation of the State. A similar system of presenting papers to parliament is found in other Westminster-style parliaments. The laying of documents makes materials available to Members for their

'... legislative research and information help create sound decision-making and a more vibrant democracy.'

scrutiny before the documents are published. A list of Documents Laid are included on the Dáil and Seanad Order Papers which are published daily on sitting days (and which are available on the parliamentary website). The L&RS is responsible for managing the procedures relating to the laying of documents. As part of this process a catalogue record is created for Documents Laid within twenty-four hours of receipt; this may be a source of co-operation with other libraries in the future.

The Oireachtas publications collection comprises the legislative outputs and proceedings of the Houses.

The L&RS historical collections include those inherited from the Chief Secretary's Office, Dublin and the Irish Office, London as well as materials purchased during the early years of the state. The historical collections span the late 16th century to 1922.

A number of exciting current inter-related collections projects will result in the complete reorganisation of the library's collections. The Historical Archive Restoration Project (HARP) includes the cleaning, conserving, cataloguing, relocating and (selected) digitisation of approximately 40,000 books, reports, pamphlets etc. HARP has been outsourced (further to tendering ▶

20 Robinson, William H., *Knowledge & Power: the essential connection between research and the work of legislature*, The European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation, 2002: 9-10.

21 Minutes of Houses of the Oireachtas Commission meeting, 24 June 2009, Accessed on 13 August 2009 at www.oireachtas.ie/documents/commission/mins20090624.pdf

22 Seanad Éireann, Volume 139, 30 March 1994, Oireachtas Library Facilities: Motion, Mr. Maurice Manning.

exercises) to a number of external contractors. Most of the historical collections will be retained but some materials with more relevance to the collecting strategies of other libraries will be donated to those libraries.

In terms of managing the collections a new collection management system (Softlink Liberty) is currently being implemented together with a new digital repository (PTFS ArchivalWare). It is planned to make at least part of the catalogue and digital repository available to the public.

New storage space has been secured within Leinster House; the parliamentary library's collections will be housed in one location for the first time in decades (on closed access a short distance away from the Reading Room). The need for off-site storage is being reduced through the rationalisation of collections.

Future

Much has been achieved during the past four years. The Houses of the Oireachtas Commission's investment in the parliament's library and research function facilitated the recruitment of a management team and specialist professional staff, the upgrading of the contemporary collections and the development of the ICT infrastructure. The investment enabled the development of a new range of information and research services for Members. Irish parliamentarians now have access to a similar range of information and research services as their colleagues in benchmark parliaments. In recent Office-wide surveys of Members' services the L&tRS has received high satisfaction ratings from Members. The investment also facilitated the first comprehensive review, reorganisation and restoration of the collections since the library was established in 1924.

Four years is quite a short time to become an authoritative and trusted part of the parliamentary process. This is a key challenge which requires further work in the areas of client engagement, product development and marketing. In addition the L&tRS standards for accuracy, reliability and timeliness must be maintained.

The demand from Members for L&tRS services is increasing while reductions in both staff numbers and budget are inevitable in the short-medium term. In order to meet rising and competing demands in a changed economic environment the L&tRS must continue to review and improve workflows and products and must exploit new technologies more effectively.

The L&tRS needs to develop a wider corporate role. Currently the L&tRS undertakes research for those who work in the parliamentary administration (primarily on best practice models and know-how in other parliaments) and advises on

survey methodologies being used in-house. The L&tRS has developed a role, which could be expanded, in the area of information, knowledge and records management.

There is scope for cooperation with other parliamentary libraries particularly through networks such as the Inter Parliamentary Research and Information Network (IPRIN), the European Centre for Research and Documentation (ECPRD) and the parliamentary library and research service section of IFLA.

There is also scope for collaborative working on a range of issues with Irish libraries in a number of sectors; these opportunities will be explored.

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Island libraries:

Public library services to the offshore islands of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

Jean Ricken and Jessica Bates



Abstract

Public library services to the inhabited islands of Ireland and Northern Ireland are a relatively recent development and part of improving access to public library services. This article reports on the provision of services to eleven islands (ten in the Republic of Ireland and one in Northern Ireland). Library staff with direct responsibility for the provision of these services were surveyed and a sample of patrons of one island library service was interviewed. Findings show that differing kinds and levels of public library service provision exist on the eleven islands and that varying challenges exist for island library staff. This reflects the unique characteristics of the islands themselves. More detail about the study can be found in Ricken (2008).

Keywords: Public Libraries, islands, Ireland

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE PROVISION to the coastal islands of Ireland and Northern Ireland is a relatively recent concept and formal island branch libraries have only been established around the coast in the past thirty years (although, as McMahon (2008) pointed out, there has been a library service of some description in operation on Inis Mór for over forty years), with over half of these having been founded within the last ten years.

According to the report *Branching out: a New Public Library Service* (1998), which reviewed public library policy in Ireland, standardised library services are not customary:

Each library authority is responsible for delivering the library service in its own area. Accordingly, there is not a standard and uniform service delivered countrywide. Local conditions both positive and negative, contribute to a service which is of a variable standard and divergent range, both within and between library authorities. (p. 31-32)



Recent library reports from Ireland and Northern Ireland – *Branching Out: A New Public Library Service* (1998); *Joining Forces: Delivering Libraries & Information Services in the Information Age* (1999); and *Northern Ireland's Libraries: A Framework for Change – Rural Proofing Report* (2006) – indicate a growing appreciation of the distinctiveness of rural librarianship. This emerging recognition coincides with a broader socially inclusive consciousness promoted by both the Irish and British governments.

Emphasis is now on public library 'access for all'. To date, little evidence exists of Irish library services to coastal islands being developed on the basis of research. However, the Taobh Tíre project underway in County Donegal since 2002 includes offshore islands in its investigation of innovative delivery of library services to isolated communities. Although not specifically concerned with coastal islands, the project includes Árainn Mhór and Toraigh in its piloting of ten installed library services points in rural Donegal. According to the project website: "Taobh Tíre is an initiative of Donegal County Council that seeks to improve library services to rural and isolated communities across County Donegal."

One example of delivery of a public library service to an inhabited coastal island being founded on research specific to that island community is that which was carried out by the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) in 2000 with regard to Rathlin Island, Co. Antrim. Following consultation with islanders an appropriate library service was tailored to Rathlin Island (NEELB, 2002). Currently, there is a door-to-door delivery of library books to households on the

first Friday of every month (for further discussion of the Rathlin service, see Hirst (2004)).

The objectives of the study reported here were:

- to provide an overview of existing public library services for island communities off the coast of Ireland (including Northern Ireland which has one inhabited offshore island);
- to explore the experiences and views of library staff serving these communities;
- To obtain the views of patrons (of one island library).

Data collection for all three strands took place between March and July 2008.

Research approach

Strand one

Data from the Irish Islands Federation (Comhdháil Oileáin na hÉireann)* web site (followed up with direct contact with the IIF manager) was used to establish exactly how many inhabited coastal islands exist off the coast of Ireland. The total number of inhabited islands off the coast of Ireland (including Northern Ireland) is thirty-one, with the population of islands ranging from one person to just under eight hundred people. Having determined the counties of Ireland with inhabited coastal islands, the relevant county library authorities were contacted to confirm the number of islands with public library services in

* The IIF describes itself as "the representative body for the inhabited offshore islands of Ireland".

operation. Through this process, eleven (of the thirty-one) islands were identified as having a public library service. Thereafter, county library authorities detailed the varying methods of island library service provisions and also revealed the basis on which these library provisions were determined.

Strand two

The second strand comprised of a survey of individuals with direct responsibility for providing library services to the islands. Following communications with the county library authorities (or regional authority in the case of Northern Ireland), a total of fourteen individuals were identified as providing services on islands around the Irish coast, and a self-completion postal questionnaire was developed to collect data from them.

Strand three

The views and experiences of a sample of library patrons of one island library service (Oileán Chléire) were gathered. For this

part of the study semi-structured interviews were undertaken with ten library patrons.

Research findings

Overview of library services

Just over one third of Ireland's inhabited coastal islands are provided with a library service of sorts. The least populated island with a library service in operation has fifty-eight residents, while the highest populated island with a library service has eight hundred and twenty-four people.

With the exception of Bere Island (population one hundred and eighty-seven), all Irish coastal islands with a population of over fifty people have a public library service available to them. Table 1 below provides a summary of the level of library services to the islands.

Table 1: Overview of island library services

<i>County</i>	<i>Island</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Library service</i>	<i>Opening hours/frequency of service</i>	<i>No. of items a user can borrow</i>	<i>Free Internet access for users</i>	<i>Dedicated web page for island library service</i>
Antrim	Rathlin	70	Yes – door-to-door delivery	Monthly visit	20	n/a	No
Cork	Bere Island	187	No	-	-	-	-
	Oileán Chléire	125	Yes – fixed-point service	10 hrs / wk	6	Yes	Yes
	Sherkin	106	Yes – fixed-point service	10 hrs / wk	6	Yes	Yes
	Heir	24	No	-	-	-	-
	Whiddy	22	No	-	-	-	-
	Long	5	No	-	-	-	-
	Dursey	6	No	-	-	-	-
	Donegal	Árainn Mhór	522	Yes – fixed-point service	9-9pm Mon-Fri 2-9pm Sat	15	Yes
Toraigh		142	Yes – fixed-point service	9-5pm, Mon-Fri	15	Yes	No
Inis Bó Finne		36	No	-	-	-	-
An tOileán Rua		13	No	-	-	-	-
Inis Fraoigh		9	No	-	-	-	-
Gabhla		4	No	-	-	-	-
Galway		Inis Mór	824	Yes – fixed-point service	10 hrs / wk	3	Yes
	Inis Oírr	247	Yes – fixed-point service	6 hrs / wk	3	Yes	Yes
	Inishbofin	199	Yes – fixed-point service	6 hrs / wk	3	Yes	Yes
	Inis Meáin	154	Yes – fixed-point service	6 hrs / wk	3	Yes	Yes
	Inis Trá Mhór	1	No	-	-	-	-
Mayo	Clare Island	136	Yes – fixed-point service	8 hrs / wk	-	No	Yes
	Inishturk	58	Yes – fixed-point service	9-5pm, Mon-Fri	-	Yes	No
	Inis Bigil	24	No	-	-	-	-
	Inishlyre	7	No	-	-	-	-
	Clynish	5	No	-	-	-	-
	Claggan	4	No	-	-	-	-
	Inishcuttle	3	No	-	-	-	-
	Inishnakillew	3	No	-	-	-	-
	Islandmore	1	No	-	-	-	-
	Inisgort	1	No	-	-	-	-
Sligo	Coney	6	No	-	-	-	-
	Dernish	1	No	-	-	-	-

[Source of population data: Irish Islands Federation]

As can be seen in Table 1, one island library service consists of a monthly door-to-door delivery of library books while all other ten islands have a physical fixed-point library location. However, in the case of Toraigh and Árainn Mhór the libraries consist of pilot 'service points' as part of the previously mentioned Taobh Tíre project. These service points hold a taster collection of books from Donegal County Library and are to be viewed as an alternative to branch libraries in rural areas that are too small to sustain a full-time branch (Quinn, 2008). The research found that island branch opening hours vary widely and depend in part on whether the library service is located in a shared building where other activities / services are provided. In the case of Rathlin, the limited frequency of visits (once monthly) is compensated for by the number of items a user can borrow, i.e. twenty items per person compared to nine items per person in static, mainland libraries in Northern Ireland. In fixed-point branch libraries on other Irish islands a maximum of six items may be borrowed (although the Taobh Tíre service points enable three items from the local collection to be borrowed at one time, or up to fifteen from other mainland branches which are then sent to the island service point).

Services appear to be similar to those available in mainland public libraries but on a smaller scale. The majority of islands hold a substantial collection of books given the size and population of the islands. The minimum amount of stock

(outside the taster collections provided at the Taobh Tíre sites) estimated by library staff stands at approximately five hundred books, including adults' and children's fiction and non-fiction books, while a figure of just under four thousand books are held in Kilonan Library on Inis Mór (Rabbitt, 2008). Audiocassettes, videos, and DVD's were also listed as being in stock in the majority of libraries. All librarians stated that stock is usually refreshed by library headquarters annually. Periodicals, newspapers and reference sections are also available in most libraries but again they are modest in quantity and selection. All ten island libraries/service points provide PC and free Internet facilities for library members (except Clare Island which there is a charge for Internet access). The nature of the Rathlin service means that there is no fixed-point library and hence no public access to computers and the Internet, which is one limitation of that service. To date, there only appears to be evidence of one island library providing access to a PC with a specifically designed keyboard for those who are visually impaired. Public photocopying facilities seem to be scarce in island libraries, although it is possible that these facilities are available elsewhere on the islands, such as in island community centres and co-op offices. Almost all the island libraries organise children's events but it appears that, outside those libraries off the coast of Galway, there is little evidence of events or courses for adults being regularly organised by the libraries. All island libraries provided a good level of inter-library loan service. This is indicated by both library staff responses and patron comments (from Oileán Chléire) and reflects the best use of resources under the circumstances

The obvious variance in library services that exists implies that there cannot be a one size fits all approach to island library



Library on
Cape Clear

*Authors would
like to thank
Chuck Kruger for
permission to use
this photograph*

services. Instead, local conditions that differ from island to island determine the type and level of library service provided to these islands. Relevant County Librarians were asked to explain the basis on which the library authority decides what kind of service is appropriate for specific islands. Answers revealed that although island size and population are important determining factors when providing a library service to coastal islands, these are not the only factors considered. Other factors include: distance from the nearest mainland branch library; frequency of ferry sailings; the existence of identifiable focal points where a library could be easily accessible to all islanders; the existence of an active and supportive island community organisation / the availability of potential community partners to help provide and sustain a library service; the availability of existing physical infrastructure; the availability of ICT infrastructure; and finally, a demand for library services from the island communities.

the nature of the study, i.e. the small number of islands and their unique characteristics.

Although 'poor building' was highlighted as the greatest challenge for three librarians, and 'lack of money' was also indicated as a particularly noticeable challenge for four librarians, overall, librarians seem to be satisfied with other organisational issues such as staff training, equipment, and collection of books and materials. The respondents revealed that many challenges they experience tend to overlap from organisational to personal challenges. For example, those

'The obvious variance in library services that exists implies that there cannot be a one size fits all approach to island library services. Instead, local conditions that differ from island to island determine the type and level of library service provided to these islands'

Survey of library staff

From a total of fourteen library staff, eleven responded to the survey (giving a valid response rate of 78.6%). Generally, the librarians perceived the most important aspect of their role as being 'helpers'. The extent to which this belief amongst librarians holds true is reflected in voluntary efforts made by some librarians to select and deliver books to those islanders who are confined to their houses. Collecting and organising material was indicated as being another important aspect of their role, while organising activities and events is viewed as a positive feature of their job. Overall, the librarians seem to view their role as providers, or even more so, as helping to provide, a social and educational amenity to the island.

In terms of being qualified in their role only one respondent holds a library assistant diploma. It was thus expected that the lack of library qualifications among island librarians would result in a high percentage of these librarians giving consideration to obtaining some level of library qualification in the future. However, only two librarians indicated that they would consider obtaining a professional qualification in the future. From this, it is possible to hypothesise that the island librarians perceive that (a) they already possess the knowledge needed to do their jobs; and/or (b) their role does not warrant a librarian qualification. This matter is worth investigating.

In exploring the challenges faced by island librarians, both organisational challenges and personal challenges were accounted for. Because different islands have different needs, contexts, and issues, so too do the librarians serving these islands. No one particular challenge emerged from the data as being the most obvious. Many of the findings in this section only pertain to a small number of respondents or sometimes only to an individual librarian but this is to be expected given

librarians who highlighted problems with staff emphasised that such problems affected them at an organisational level and at a personal level. Lack of relief staff is a major concern for one island librarian, while lack of funding for any designated library staff is a problem for another. These issues need to be addressed at an organisational level to prevent them affecting library staff at a personal level.

Though only one respondent indicated that a lack of awareness of library facilities on the island was a particular challenge for them, a number of librarians stated that library services are poorly promoted to visitors. Thus, there is a need for active promotion of island library services to ensure people (both living on the island and visiting the island) are fully aware of the services available to them. Such active promotional efforts could, in turn, help address the challenge of keeping people interested, a challenge that was mentioned as a particular issue for other librarians. Calls for extended opening hours, particularly in summer months, suggest that the limited opening hours currently in place can cause problems for librarians when having to cope with increasing library use. One librarian highlighted that is not only the number of people that can be challenging to facilitate but that the varying needs of a diverse user population can be problematic. One librarian revealed how a late evening shift can affect them personally as by the time the shift is finished the last ferry has departed the island and thus they cannot leave the island if they need to do so. In such a case the opening and closing times should perhaps be slightly altered to better coincide with final ferry sailings. It is recognised that late opening hours could facilitate library use by ferry crew. However, this would depend on whether or not the ferry crew reside on the island. In some cases the ferries serving these islands operate from the mainland and thus dock at mainland ports. Again, the varying

circumstances needing to be considered for each coastal island are highlighted here.

Although only one librarian emphasised isolation from branch networks as a negative aspect and not specifically as a challenge, findings reveal that there is an extremely low level of communication amongst island branch libraries within and between local authorities. The fact that findings also report that 90.9% of the respondents would like to regularly communicate with other island librarians and feel that they could only benefit from doing so indicates that this is a challenge that currently lies before all island branch library staff, and is one that should be immediately addressed given the positive feedback from respondents. Furthermore, the respondents were given the opportunity to make suggestions on how to overcome these poor communication issues. Findings show that 'Email updates/networks' is the preferred method of future communication. This could be relatively easy and cost-effective to facilitate and make happen. Informal face-to-face meetings at various island locations are also viewed as another possibility by a high percentage of respondents. This demonstrates the willingness of island librarians to examine other island libraries, to try and fully understand the context and environment in which they are operating, and to thereafter inevitably learn from them and share ideas with them.

Views of patrons on Oileán Chléire

The general consensus among the library patrons of Oileán Chléire library was that they are grateful for the public library service available to them. They appreciate the convenience of being able to use the service for general library purposes such as access to information, and they view the service not only as an educational amenity but also as a social amenity. There is much value placed on the service as a resource for children on the island and, in particular, as a learning support for the youth. All those interviewed seemed extremely satisfied with provisions for their personal needs and some spoke of how the 'personal touch' that they experience when using the service adds to this satisfaction. This more intimate small branch library setting allows the island librarian to build up relationships with the patrons and enables the librarian to be more in tune with the users' personal needs and preferences more so than might be possible in a larger mainland library.

It is also worth noting that participants were especially satisfied with the inter-library loan service available to them. Some view this service as being economically beneficial to them because a) they do not have to purchase the books, and b) they do not have to store the books in their homes. This use of the inter-library loan service could also signify the library patron's need to heavily rely on the service due to a limited available stock selection in the library building. Thus, findings from the survey where librarians reported delays with inter-library loans should not be overlooked. If the inter-library loan service is viewed in a

similar positive light by other island library patrons, who may also experience limited stock selection, then attempts should be made to combat such delays to ensure greater satisfaction amongst island library users.

Interviewees suggested possible improvements to the library service on Oileán Chléire but all suggestions were centred on the core need to firstly improve the library building. For example, participants believed that more space would lead to more stock, more equipment and more events being organised. Some participants were unable to suggest any additional services that could be included due to being unfamiliar with library services elsewhere. This admitted lack of knowledge of other possible library services could result in lower expectations of the level of library services available and thus it is felt that the high level of satisfaction expressed by library patrons should be viewed with slight caution. It is possible that island library patrons have curbed their expectations due to ideas they hold about the limitations of services on a small island. Some library users appeared to have lower expectations of library services, especially in relation to stock, due to both the size of the island and, more so, the size of the library premises. Also, echoing librarians' survey responses, library patrons mentioned the lack of services in general currently available on the island. It is then quite plausible that islanders come across as being so appreciative and satisfied with the library service available to them simply because it is a welcomed service in a place where such amenities are few.

Finally, participants repeatedly mentioned the time constraints imposed on them when visiting the mainland. They stressed the importance and necessity of having the library service physically available on the island as time rarely allows for visits to other libraries when on the mainland. Interviewees explained that visits to the mainland normally comprise of a set amount of errands to be carried out within ferry sailing times and visits to mainland libraries do not usually fit into the tight schedule. If the same can be said for people on other islands then further investigation is needed to determine the suitability and satisfaction with mainland branch libraries as local library service providers for coastal island residents (who have no access to an island library service).

Concluding comments

This investigation has delivered for the first time a portrait of public library services to the inhabited coastal islands of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The study revealed that many varying challenges exist for island librarians. This variance is understandable due to the nature of the study, i.e. a small number of islands with different contexts and issues. However, there are some general observations that can be drawn from the study: island library services need to be adequately and correctly promoted on the World Wide Web, and island library locations and facilities need to be better promoted on the islands, especially to visitors. The level of island library service provision for those with disabilities and special needs also needs to be investigated, along with possible measures for widening access.

Above all, increased communication via the establishment of a unified virtual network is both desired by island librarians and needed by them if they are to continue to try to improve current island library services. In investigating this particular area of interest it has been revealed that these librarians are somewhat alone at the outpost. The lack of a policy document specific to public library service provisions for coastal island communities, and the subsequent fragmented approach by local authorities in providing these services, is defensible due to the variance of local conditions on these islands which necessitate a divergent range of library service delivery. However, the absence of any unified channel of contact for these island library staff is cause for concern. At present, no virtual network of communication appears to be utilised so as to ensure these librarians can liaise with those working in similar isolated locations around the coast of Ireland. In today's globalised community, where it is perceived people are unified and functioning together as a single society, it is hard to imagine that penalties of isolation are still endured. This is particularly difficult to comprehend within the field of LIS where ICT is a major factor in managing and processing information. It is evident that library staff serving coastal island communities in Ireland experience a certain degree of isolation within their working environments.

While analysis gathered from interviews conducted are not generalisable, they reveal that individuals interviewed are generally satisfied with the library service offered to them and view the island library as an important educational and social amenity. There is need for a more comprehensive all Ireland survey of library users and non-users specifically designed for Ireland's inhabited coastal islands. This research should not only limit itself to those island communities that are already provided with a library service on the island but should also encompass those islands where residents have to travel to the mainland if they wish to avail of public library services, e.g. Bere Island, and the islands with a population of less than fifty.

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Lenus: from healing God to Health Repository

Roife Lawton

ABSTRACT

Institutional repositories (IRs) represent a new wave of electronic library growth and collection development. At first IRs proved popular in academic institutions but increasingly they are gaining momentum in other types of organisations. This article examines the definition and purpose of IRs and explores their application in the Irish health library sector. Particular focus is given to 'Lenus' (named after the Celtic God of Healing) the Irish Health Repository – a national resource developed and managed at the Regional Library & Information Service (RLIS), HSE, Dr. Steevens' Hospital.

Keywords

Institutional Repositories; Open Access; Digital libraries; Collection Development; Health Science Libraries, Ireland

The librarian collecting electronic resources is not a harvester of cultivated crops but a hunter and gatherer of wild fruits and other treasures (Rioux, 1997)

LENUS IS A NATIONAL INITIATIVE designed to provide access to both current and archived Irish health research. Launched in February 2009, it is a repository in its infancy but showing significant potential to become a key resource for Irish health researchers. This article explores the evolution of Lenus against the backdrop of a changing Irish health landscape, the development of the open access movement and institutional repositories in Ireland.

Some common definitions of IRs locate repositories specifically within academic environments, most often either university or higher education institutions. (Crow, 2002, Lynch, 2003). Others, such as Mark Ware, offer a broader definition:

“An institutional repository is defined to be a web-based database (repository) of scholarly material which is institutionally defined (as opposed to a subject-based repository); cumulative and perpetual (a collection of record); open and interoperable (e.g. using OAI-compliant software);¹ and thus collects, stores and disseminates (is part of the process of scholarly communication). In addition, most would include long-term preservation of digital materials as a key function of IRs. (Ware, 2004)”

The primary function of an IR is to capture and make available an organisation’s explicit knowledge in electronic format. Typically IRs are web-based and Open Access (OA).

Open Access

The key concept of Open Access is that documents (and other data and media) are made freely available online with or without limited copyright and licensing restrictions by authors. The two most common ways of making works openly accessible are via OA journals or OA repositories. In recent years institutions and funding bodies have increasingly issued “open access mandates” requiring researchers and academics to deposit their works in an open access repository. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University shook the academic world when it issued an OA mandate in February 2008 requiring faculty to allow the university to make their scholarly output freely available online. The previous year (2007), the UK Medical Research Council published a policy and guidance document on OA. The UK Wellcome Trust issued a position statement in the same year. In Ireland most funding bodies now have an Open Access Mandate or position statement including Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), the Health Research Board (HRB), the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET). These mandates support making publicly funded research freely accessible in an open access repository.

Institutional Repositories – a global phenomenon

IRs have been in existence in libraries since the mid 2000s. They emerged first in the academic library sector with large institutions such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of California leading the way. The National Institutes of Health in the US has operated PUBMED Central, an archive of biomedical and life sciences literature, since 2000.²

Institutional repositories are widespread and numerous with exponential growth recorded worldwide (see OpenDOAR)³. There are mailing lists, blogs and even conferences devoted to

IRs. The Directory of Open Access Repositories, OpenDOAR, currently has over 1,400 listings and the Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR) lists 1,396 repositories.⁴ Both directories list twelve Irish IRs. Ten out of the twelve represent universities or Institutes of Technology, the other two are health science libraries (HSE Lenus and RCSI epubs).

In Ireland universities have also paved the way for the establishment of IRs. NUI Maynooth first launched ePrints in 2003 and was the first Irish university to host an institutional repository.⁵ In 2005 the Regional Library & Information Service (RLIS) at HSE in Dublin launched Hyperion which was an Irish Health Publications Archive (IHPA): it was essentially an early form of an institutional repository. Trinity’s TARA (Trinity Access to Research Archive) followed in 2006,⁶ then UCD’s Research Online the following year.⁷ The All-Ireland electronic Health Library (AIEHL) made available in 2007 by the Institute of Public Health in Ireland is also worth noting as it has a public

‘These mandates support making publicly funded research freely accessible in an open access repository.’

health focus.⁸ It is not an institutional or cross- institutional repository but it does harvest content from a selection of interoperable websites including at the time the IHPA. Between 2007 and 2009, a further eight IRs in Ireland emerged. As noted above, there are two in Irish health libraries.

The Research Cycle

The primary focus of this article is to set the scene for the HSE RLIS input into the IR structure and open access progress in Ireland. The cycle of research is not restricted to academic institutions and research funding bodies. Organisations such as government departments, health agencies, the Health Service Executive etc., have an input into the research cycle in other ways. For example, HSE publications and policy implementation, often lead to further research or are a direct result of research. Many of the key reports of the HSE form the basis of how health services are structured in Ireland. Official reports, or those undertaken by task forces and independent groups, often highlight the need for further research in other areas. *Vision for Change* is a key document about mental health services and policy in Ireland. It is frequently quoted by mental health workers across the country as one of the landmark documents in their profession. One of its recommendations is a call for research and for dissemination of that research:

1 OAI – Open Archives Initiative. “Open” in the OAI context refers to machine interoperability.
2 <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/>
3 Growth of the OpenDOAR database <http://www.opendoar.org/index.html> accessed June 22nd 2009.

4 ROAR <http://roar.eprints.org/>
5 <http://eprints.may.ie/>
6 <http://www.tara.tcd.ie/>
7 <http://irserver.ucd.ie/dspace/>
8 <http://www.aiehl.org/>

Recommendation 19.2: “The HIQA should put mechanisms in place to carry out systematic evaluations on all forms of interventions in mental health and this information should be widely disseminated.”⁹

Similarly the recent Monageer Inquiry has amongst its recommendations a call for a review into familicide¹⁰ which will lead to research in this area.

It is important that non-academic organisations with an input into the research cycle maintain and make accessible their intellectual output. In the case of the HSE the RLIS as previously noted set up a digital archive in 2005. The content of this archive was migrated to the new “Irish Health Repository” (Lenus) so it is interesting to explore how, and in what context, the archive evolved.

Organisational restructuring

The organisational structure of the Irish health service has been shaped and reshaped many times. Following the *Health Act, 1970*, Ireland was divided into eight Health Boards; the Eastern Health Board covered the eastern part. The East of Ireland always presented an imbalance due to the high population density. Just one health board – the Eastern Health Board (EHB) – was responsible for this region up until 1999. The Eastern Regional Health Board then replaced the EHB and a further three area health boards and a shared services organisation were established. A further fifty-two health agencies existed in Ireland at that time. The founding of the Health Service Executive (HSE) in 2005 saw seventeen of these agencies abolished, including five in the East alone. The HSE was now a national health executive with a new structure of four regions.

Why is this restructuring important and how is it relevant to institutional repositories? Apart from the administrative, financial and managerial burden posed by restructuring, there was also a real and immediate threat of the loss of corporate knowledge. In the East alone, three Area Boards and two health authorities each with their own set of publications, their own websites and their own Board minutes were abolished. The rest of the country had an additional seven health boards, all with their own publications, websites etc. to add to the mix. When these Boards were disbanded so too were their secretariats. The secretariats as part of their function, maintained all board minutes and publications. Libraries did and do exist in these areas but do not always have access to a full suite of Board publications.

Preserving corporate knowledge

Despite these structural overhauls, libraries in the HSE escaped restructuring and the RLIS remained responsible for the “region” of the counties Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare. In 2005, the challenge was primarily to rescue the corporate knowledge of the five organisations in this area and secondly those of the other

seven areas. A successful case was made convincing management of the benefit of investing in digital archiving software and having the library head up this project. Funding was granted and the Hyperion system was purchased in 2004. A project team was assembled with an array of tasks assigned to each member. The team consisted of librarians and representatives from the Communication Department and the Department of Public Health in the HSE East.

Irish Health Publications Archive Project

This project involved scanning and downloading publications from websites before they were dismantled, making partnerships with various communications departments who traditionally held the “publications function” of these organisations, contacting secretariats for copies of Board minutes and others to see if scanning was an option. Approximately 1,000 documents were scanned, converted to OCR and output in PDF format. These, together with documents born digital, were catalogued and a metadata entry was recorded in the Hyperion System. The full text file was attached to each record and made available via the library OPAC. The next concern was finding a home on the Web for the system. The parent organisation of the RLIS was the Eastern Health Shared Services (EHSS), whose website was replaced by the HSE. Getting a link – any link – on the HSE website was not an option at the time.

Hence the staff of the RLIS was instrumental in the establishment of the HSE Libraries Online website (<http://www.hslibrary.ie>) which provided a web presence for the IHPA in 2006. The IHPA was well received by the Irish health library community with much positive feedback received via the HSLG discussion list and other informal conversations. Similarly health workers found one access point most useful and a good resource for those “hard to find” publications.

For all the positives there were an equal amount of negatives, particularly in the last two years of the project. Technology had moved on and institutional repositories were springing up in Ireland in other institutions. Meanwhile, the supplier of Hyperion (Sirsi Corporation) was undergoing its own restructuring in a merger with DYNIX and product development came to an abrupt halt as a result. This meant that Web 2.0 tools were not a feature and the interface was seriously deficient both cosmetically and in user-friendliness. Pop-ups were a new feature of Internet Explorer which caused endless frustration for users when they clicked on a full text file. Added to this the search engine was, at best, creaking so a solution was needed and needed fast.

A time for change

Due to staffing considerations, a somewhat whittled down project team was reinstated. A project kick-off meeting devoted one day to determine where we were, where we wanted to be and how we might get there. Most importantly as a team, we took a critical look (using SWOT analysis) at the IHPA and were determined to do things better the next time, given the opportunity. One of the main findings of this day was that we did not adequately include our users in the design, content and function of the IHPA. There were many reasons for this –

mainly the limited time available. This was corrected by several means: a user survey was circulated to other HSE librarians in the country and opinions were sought from other health librarians. The response, as anticipated, was that, Yes, the HSE needed an Institutional Repository. In addition, a call was made for HSE staff to participate in a focus group for research. The response to the call was positive. Staff were interested in research: many of them produce publications for the HSE and are actively publishing research in many prominent journals. The call generated enough interest for two sessions to be held for the focus group. A day was spent with the group determining what replacement would be found for the IHPA, what their needs as researchers were, what the content of the IR should include and feedback on three systems. Questionnaires were completed by the group on each of the systems and test scenarios were conducted where dummy files were uploaded. The researchers rated each system in terms of ease of use, flexibility, user-friendliness and how likely they were to use them to upload their research. This day proved invaluable as a real insight into the needs of researchers on the ground. The feedback was gathered and scrutinised. The overall winner was BioMed Central's Open Repository system. BioMed Central is a pioneer of the Open Access Movement and was the first OA publisher. The new system was put in place during the autumn of 2008 and by the end of the year the content from the IHPA was successfully migrated.

The birth of Lenus

Much time was given to the branding of the new system which emerged as another weakness during the SWOT analysis of the IHPA. Traditionally marketing is not an area where libraries tend to excel and the RLIS is no exception. A call and competition (sponsored by BioMed) to name the new repository was announced on the HSLG and HEANET (LIR) discussion lists. In the end the name chosen did not make the mark as the domain name was taken. After further procrastination a name was chosen with the help of a communications expert in the HSE and Lenus (taken from the Celtic God of healing) was born. Lenus the Irish Health Repository was successfully launched in February 2009.

Content and purpose of IRs

At the time of writing, there is only one other IR in an Irish health library – that of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). The e-publications@RCSI (<http://epubs.rcsi.ie>) is an open access institutional repository of research and scholarly output of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.¹¹ The repository aims include the dissemination of the research of the RCSI and related research following the Open Access mandate. This is not dissimilar to the aims and objectives of other Irish Institutional Repositories. Lenus differs from other Irish IRs both in content and purpose. Firstly, it serves as more of a cross-institutional repository. In fact, there is purposely no mention of “institution” in its name as this implies a restriction

on content. Publications are collected not only from the HSE and former health boards but also from the Department of Health and Children and many of the Irish health agencies. These are primarily official publications, HSE staff theses and grey literature. In the future it is envisaged that journal articles will also make up the core of the content. It is important that these types of publications are collected in one searchable system as the alternative would be to search a myriad of organisational websites, some of which no longer exist. The inclusion of former health board publications as well as HSE publications is important because this is effectively what makes up the intellectual output of the HSE. Secondly, a researcher does not have to be a HSE staff member to submit research to

‘It is important that non-academic organisations with an input into the research cycle maintain and make accessible their intellectual output’

Lenus. The criterion for inclusion is that the research is done by a person while in Ireland on a health topic. This makes the content of Lenus uniquely Irish and uniquely related to health.

Lenus serves as a central access point for any researcher interested in, for example, the historical beginnings of the Irish health system, how and why it was structured and restructured, how it was and is managed, how it evolved and how it functions today. In fact, it has been very useful in doing the research for this article. It could be argued that a search engine such as Google could provide the same output with perhaps better search capabilities but as mentioned some of the websites no longer exist. Lenus is OAI compliant and registered which means that Google can harvest information from Lenus and if Google is used to search for any reports on Irish healthcare then Lenus provides many search results. On a related point in the IHPA, a full MARC record was recorded for every digital object which was then displayed in the OPAC. With Lenus, the role of the OPAC is increasingly less important as an access point as Google indexing picks up LENUS deposits from the repository.

Rationalisation

The job of harvesting content is on-going and labour intensive. The changing structure of the health system in Ireland does not make this any easier. In October 2008, the Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, announced a “major rationalisation” of the health sector involving the amalgamation of fifteen ▶

9 *Vision for Change: Report of the Expert Group on mental health policy*. Dublin: Stationery Office, 2006: 206.

10 “Monageer Inquiry”. 2008. Recommendation 8.26. p.151.

Available at http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/monageer_inquiry.pdf?direct=1

11 <http://www.rcsi.ie/index.jsp?1nID=93&tpID=103&tnID=1513>

agencies. The programme for rationalisation is time-tabled for completion by 2011. What is to become of the websites, publications and libraries of the agencies involved? In the meantime the RLIS will proceed in capturing what is viable from a staffing point of view. In the not too distant future the vision of Lenus is to be a repository where content will be submitted directly by health agencies and authors. Indeed, this has already begun to happen with some health organisations directly submitting content for inclusion. In many ways, we are learning to run before we can walk but with the advances in web technology and the commitment of health organisations in Ireland to Open Access, surely IRs represents a real and viable future for health libraries?

The future

One of the next key challenges for the Lenus repository is to gather momentum within the HSE to issue a position statement on Open Access. At present deposits are encouraged by the library or from the bottom up. Once an OA mandate or similar is in place, HSE employees will be encouraged from the top down to deposit works into Lenus. In theory this should result in some sizeable contributions. Forming partnerships with other similar organisations has proven most beneficial. The RLIS has formed a partnership with HERA – Norway’s Electronic Health Library’s open research archive for hospitals and other Norwegian health institutions. This has been very helpful in exchanging policies and stages of development. Norway has a strong open access mandate at national level which is something towards which Ireland should strive. Another challenge is to maintain standards in Lenus that ensure interoperability with other systems. Irish Universities Association (IUA) libraries, funded under the SIF initiative, are working towards developing a national research portal harvesting content from institutional repositories. A pilot phase is scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2010. Developing a partnership with Irish universities to include Lenus in this rollout will be a key objective for the future.

One of the objectives is that Lenus develops beyond a repository or “cardboard box” against which Dorothea Salo (University of Wisconsin IR manager) warns. (Salo 2009) The vision is that it may be used as a collaborative tool for researchers. This will be facilitated with technical updates in the future. Finally during the summer of 2009 a reconvening of the researcher focus group will be held to take stock of how Lenus is being received by researchers in the HSE. Feedback on this will inform future pathways for Lenus. The repository will remain an integral piece of the library’s service offering and involving users on the ground at regular intervals will assist in keeping the focus relevant to their needs.

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Evaluating the usability of the Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive

Senan Healy and Judith Wusteman



Abstract

This paper describes a usability study that was carried out to evaluate how well the University College Dublin(UCD) Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive (IVRLA) Version 1.0 meets its users' requirements. The study concentrated on addressing the basic functionality of IVRLA Version 1.0, but touched upon the added-value function of social bookmarking and the requirements of Irish language users.



THE IRISH VIRTUAL RESEARCH LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE (IVRLA) is a major digitisation and digital object management project. It was launched at UCD Dublin in January 2005 and is currently scheduled to run for five years.¹ The IVRLA was conceived as a means of preserving and facilitating access to a range of textual, graphical and multimedia materials held in UCD's main repositories. It also aims to "advance the research agenda into the use and challenges affecting digital primary source repositories ... [and] digital curation over the coming years".²

As of April 2009, material from the following repositories has been digitised and is available via IVRLA Version 1.0:

- UCD Delargy Centre for Irish Folklore and the National Folklore Collection
- Irish Dialect Archive

- UCD Archives
- UCD Library Special Collections
- UCD Mícheál Ó Cléirigh Institute for the Study of Irish History and Civilisation

IVRLA 1.0 enables users to browse, search, tag and cite digital objects, as well as view or download them in a variety of file formats.

Search options

The IVRLA graphical user interface (GUI) allows users to search the collections in three ways, as illustrated in Figures 1, 2 and 3.

The simplest search option, illustrated in Figure 1, comprises a search box. This option, referred hereto as the "Search All Collections" feature, appears at the top of every page. ▶



Figure 1. "Search All Collections" Function on IVRLA Main page

1 The IVRLA is a component of the Humanities Institute of Ireland (HII) and is funded by the Programme for Research

in Third Level Institutions (PRTL) Phase 3.
2 IVRLA: <http://ivrla.ucd.ie>



Figure 2. Quick search function on IVRLA

The “Quick Search” option, illustrated in Figure 2, provides a similar search experience but also allows users to narrow their search by selecting a specific collection or resource format (such as text, still image or sound recording).

“Detailed search”, shown in Figure 3, allows users to select index types, indicate Boolean operators, and to limit searches by a number of fields including institution, repository and collection. It also allows users to browse the contents of IVRLA by subjects, names, places or titles.

Usability Testing

Usability refers to “the extent to which a product can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use”.³ Usability testing is fast becoming a central component in the design and evaluation of software such as digital libraries (Jung *et al.*, 2008; George, 2008, Long *et al.*, 2005; Norberg *et al.*, 2005). Such testing involves representative users attempting realistic tasks using the system under test. The users are generally asked to think out loud while completing the tasks. Observation and note-taking by a facilitator, accompanied by video recording, is generally found to produce the best results. Such a usability study provides researchers with a mental model of a participant’s use of a system, as well as providing a better understanding of how the system works (Clark, 2004; George, 2005; George, 2008; King & Jannik, 2005; Norberg & Vassiliadis, 2005; Turnbow *et al.*, 2005; Tolliver *et al.*, 2005) When compared with other methods of assessing software, usability testing has been found to be effective and efficient. For example, Ahmed (2008) found usability testing using actual users had a higher percentage of problems than testing using heuristic evaluation or cognitive walkthrough.

In a widely cited article, Nielsen (2000) states that “the best results come from testing no more than five users”. Typically, a single user will identify one third of the problems in a piece of software. Testing with more than five users can be a waste of time as the same issues may be observed without much new being learned about the system (Nielsen, 2000). Krug (2006) believes that three or four users are an adequate number for each round of testing.



Figure 3. Detailed search function on IVRLA

The IVRLA Version 1.0 Usability Test

Once pilot testing had been successfully completed, the usability testing of IVRLA Version 1.0 was carried out over two days in summer 2008. Following Krug's advice (2006) concerning numbers of testers, four history researchers were enrolled to perform the tests. In addition, two Irish language researchers were also invited to participate to ensure a conclusive test of Irish language functionality.

For each of the six participants, a short pre-usability test questionnaire was used to gather demographic information relating to occupation, internet usage and knowledge of digital resources. Participants were then given some background information on the IVRLA. In an adaptation of a test script by Krug (2006), the facilitator then outlined what was required of participants, emphasising that the purpose of the usability test was to test the system and not the participants. The latter were encouraged to say exactly what they thought of the IVRLA and to "think out loud" as much as possible. They were told that they could ask questions during the test but that the facilitator might choose not to answer some questions until after the test was complete. The participants were asked to sign a release form giving permission for the test session to be used for research purposes. Finally, they were asked if they had any questions before the test began.

Following Krug's (2006) guidelines, the usability test was divided into two sections: "get it" tests and key task testing. As the name implies, "get it" testing aims to determine whether participants understand the purpose and structure of the site they are testing. Participants were asked to take a moment to review the IVRLA Welcome page, to comment on any features they liked or disliked and to give their general impression of the page.

Key Task Testing

The key task testing involved the completion of five separate tasks. A different set of tasks were provided for the history and Irish language researchers. The tasks developed for both user groups were evaluating identical features but the required searches differed to reflect the research backgrounds of the testers.

The IVRLA collection comprises English and Irish language material. Although it is intended to further develop Irish language functionality for the IVRLA user interface, at present, none exists. Instead, the Irish language researchers were given tasks relating to Irish language digital objects within the IVRLA and asked to comment on the level of Irish language functionality they would like to see incorporated in the user interface.

1. Basic Functionality of IVRLA

One of the study's research questions was to what extent the basic functionality of the IVRLA user interface was meeting user requirements. To address this question, the usability tests focused on three areas of the IVRLA user interface: the search function, viewing digital objects and citing information from the IVRLA.

i) Search options

The first two tasks focused on the usability of the Quick and Detailed search options.

Tasks 1 and 2 as completed by History researchers:

1. Imagine you want to find a letter written by Sir Roger Casement to Robert Donovan. Do a search and look at the results.
2. Imagine you want to find a letter written by Matthew Dawes to Eugene O. Curry concerning his genealogical research into the Corr family. Use the *detailed search* to run a query using this information and look at the results.

Tasks 1 and 2 as completed by Irish language researchers:

1. Imagine you want to find a letter written by Tomás de Bhaldraithe to Miss Fionnuala Duane. Do a search and look at the results.
2. Imagine you want to find a letter from Marion Gunn to Fionnuala Duane containing information about correspondence between Cornelius Duane and Seán Ó Dalaigh. Use the *detailed search* to run a query using this information and look at the results.

ii) Viewing digital objects

IVRLA Version 1.0 makes digital images available in DjVu and JPEG formats. The aim of Task 3 was to explore the provision and use of these formats.

Task 3 as completed by History researchers:

Find a photograph of James Joyce as a boy. Now imagine you want to view the larger digital image of the photograph and then save the digital image of the photograph to your desktop. Try and do this now.

Task 3 as completed by Irish Language researchers:

Find the item entitled *Toradh Ceistiúcháin ar Na Tínceirí, Cúige Laighean*. Now imagine you want to view the larger digital image and then save the digital image to your desktop. Try and do this now.

iii) Citing Information

To aid researchers in creating citations and to provide them with a permanent link to IVRLA materials, a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) is provided for each item held, as illustrated in Figure 4. Task 4 was designed to investigate whether or not participants were able to identify a DOI provided by the IVRLA and use it in creating a citation.

Task 4 as completed by History researchers:

Search for an item relating to the Ancient Foundling Hospital in Dublin. Look at your results. Select one of the items you have found. Now imagine that you are going to use this document in your research and you want to create a citation. How would you do this? ▶

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- 3 Usability Net: International standards for HCI and usability:http://www.usabilitynet.org/tools/r_international.htm

Figure 4. The Digital Object Identifier (DOI)



Task 4 as completed by Irish language researchers:
 Search for a questionnaire response by Seán Ó Dúbhda, Carraig, Ballynagall, Dingle, Co. Kerry. Look at your results. Select one of the items you have found. Now imagine that you are going to use this document in your research and you want to create a citation. How would you do this?

2. Added-value Functionality

Another of the study’s research questions was how effective the added-value function of social bookmarking was in meeting user requirements. Thus, the final task concentrated on testing the use of the Delicious bookmarking tool in the IVRLA, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Task 5 as completed by History researchers:
 From the COLLECTION BROWSE page select the papers of William Frazer. You do not have time to complete your

search but you would like to return to view this collection again. Bookmark this page using the Delicious bookmarking tool.

Task 5 as completed by Irish language researchers:
 From the COLLECTION BROWSE page select the Irish Dialect Archive Card Catalogue. You do not have time to complete your search but you would like to return to view this collection again. Bookmark this page using the Delicious bookmarking tool.

Results of Usability Testing

Search

Throughout the usability test, unless otherwise requested, participants only used the Search All Collections option. None

Figure 5. Bookmarking a page using Delicious



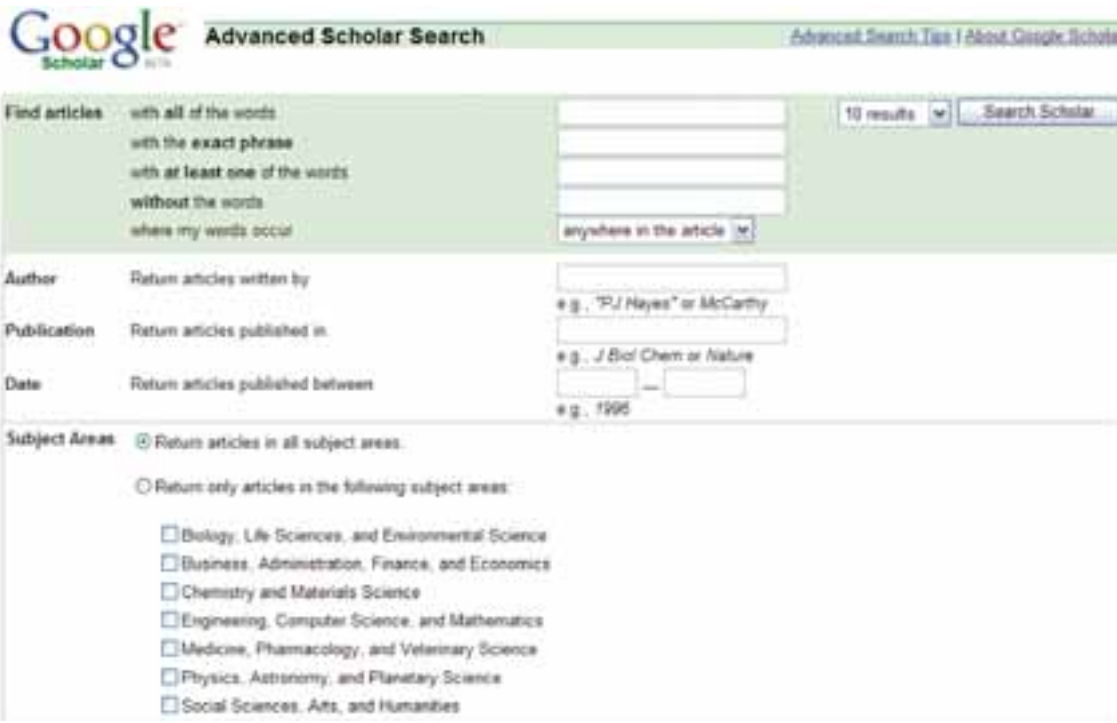


Figure 6. Google Scholar Advanced Search Option

of the participants chose to use either the Detailed Search or the Quick Search option. Participants indicated during the test and in the pre-study questionnaire that they found detailed searching or Boolean searching confusing and preferred a simple search function similar to that used in commercial search engines. This is not an uncommon finding. Miller (2004) summarises the phenomenon well:

“Google Scholar has taught us, quite powerfully, that the user just wants a search box. Arguments as to whether or not this is “best” for the user are moot – it doesn’t matter if it’s best if nobody uses it.”

During the test, it appeared that, once users had noticed the Search All Collections option, they ignored the other options. Further testing would be required to determine whether users can optimally achieve all of their search goals using only this simple form of search or whether more advanced search options

are necessary. If the latter is the case, it might be appropriate to discourage users from immediately choosing the simplest search option. This could be done by removing the Search All Collections option from the IVRLA Main page, thus forcing users to begin their search from the page offering Quick and Detailed options. The Search All Collections option could remain available at the top of all other pages, giving users a subsequent choice of using it or navigating back to the page offering more advanced search features.

As part of the pre-usability test questionnaire, two participants had indicated that Google Scholar was their preferred digital resource, stating that it was “quick” and had “links to everything”. Another participant selected Irish History Online as their preferred digital resource as it provided “easy access to primary sources”. Both Google Scholar (Figure 6) and Irish History Online (Figure 7) provide users with the ability to conduct an advanced search. However, their advanced search



Figure 7. Irish History Online Advanced Search Option

options are both kept to a minimum, giving users a total of nine search options to choose from. In comparison, the Detailed Search function of the IVRLA allows users to insert three search terms and select corresponding Boolean operators for each. It also provides six different drop-down menus, which allow users to limit the search, and also a subject browse option where users can search under the options of All Subjects, Names, Places and Titles. Furthermore, the layout of Google Scholar and Irish History Online appears in a linear fashion, one option below the other, whereas the options in the IVRLA Detailed Search are laid out horizontally as well as vertically.

If the Detailed Search function of the IVRLA appeared simpler and more familiar to that of other digital collections commonly used by members of the IVRLA user community, it might be more widely used. One possible step in this process would be to amalgamate the Search function and the Subject Browse function. In addition, Boolean search operators could be replaced by the option to select a search term from a prescribed list including Author or Name, Place, Title and All Subjects. Furthermore, the Limit By function could be moved from its current position, to the right of the Search function, and be placed below the search boxes so that all search functions appear in linear form.

Viewing digital objects

Task three required participants to find an item in the IVRLA, open the digital image and save it to the desktop of the computer. Despite having been introduced to the Welcome page that contained instructions for downloading the DjVu plugin, none of the participants realised that they should use this plug-in to complete the task. One participant opened the JPEG version of the item; the other five saved the item's thumbnail. After participants had been shown the DjVu plug-in link, they were asked to download the plug-in and attempt the task again. Three participants stated that this was the hardest task in the test and that the plug-in download process was confusing.

It is a widely perceived in web design circles that users do not like having to download software. In the case of the IVRLA, a balance has to be struck between the level of frustration due to the download requirement and the provision of high quality images. It should be noted that, once the download process was complete and participants began to view digital objects using DjVu, they were immediately impressed by the visual quality of the digital objects. Given this, the only solution appears to be for the IVRLA website to place greater emphasis on the importance and benefits of downloading the DjVu plug-in.

Citing Information

None of the six participants used the DOI provided by the IVRLA in creating their citation. Four participants indicated

that they would reference the IVRLA URL when creating a reference.

When the DOI was pointed out and its purpose explained, participants suggested that it be made more noticeable. A more vibrant colour might assist in this regard. The IVRLA help page provides information on DOIs; a link from each DOI to this information would be useful.

Added-value Functionality

In Task 5, participants were able to locate the Delicious link on the IVRLA web site without any difficulty. None of the participants had Delicious accounts so they were asked to create one. This involves creating a username, adding Delicious shortcut buttons and importing bookmarks from a web browser. When creating an account, four participants chose not to install the Delicious shortcut buttons. This was problematic because the Delicious icon does not appear on the page of each digital object within the IVRLA but only on the Content and Structure and Collection Description pages. As a result, if a user does not install the Delicious shortcut buttons in their browser, they are restricted in the degree of bookmarking that they can carry out in the IVRLA.

From the pre-usability test questionnaire, it was determined that none of the participants had previous experience of using social bookmarking tools. The IVRLA Delicious feature will only be of use to researchers if they are prepared to use Delicious as a core online research technique. Thus, the real usefulness of such a feature will depend on future adoption of tagging technology within the Arts and Humanities research community.

Bilingual Functionality

Pavani (2001) outlines three language control parameters that can be implemented in a multilingual digital library: language of content, language of catalogue entry and language of navigation. Both Irish language researchers stated that, when searching for Irish material within a digital collection, they expect all three of these parameters to use Irish. Caccamo (2006) recommends the development of an Irish language version of the IVRLA user interface, to be offered in tandem with the English language version. She cites the bilingual user interface to The National Library of Wales online resources⁴ as an example of how two languages can be incorporated successfully. The Digital Humanities Observatory (DHO)⁵ was established to coordinate the collaborative development of humanities computing in Ireland. It could play a key role in providing advice on how best to tackle the issue of developing a bilingual user interface in a standards-compliant way.

One possible method of achieving the aim of Irish language metadata would be to encourage volunteers to submit Irish

language translations of metadata. This method has been used successfully in the development of the International Children's Digital Library (Hutchinson et al., 2005).

Conclusion

The main focus of IVRLA Version 1.0 is to provide basic functionality such as searching and viewing of digital content for users. The next major redesign of the IVRLA user interface will focus on developing added-value functionality beyond the use of simple Delicious tagging.

This will include the provision of user accounts and the ability for users to build personal virtual collections (Drohan, 2008). There are also plans to investigate interoperability with e-learning tools and Virtual Learning Environments. Future usability testing is likely to concentrate on these aspects.

The usability tests described in this article concentrated on evaluating the basic functionality of the IVRLA. The results of the tests point to some of the potential ways in which the user experience of the IVRLA can be improved, thus further facilitating access to its unique and valuable collections.

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4 The National Library of Wales: <http://www.llgc.org.uk>

5 Digital Humanities Observatory: <http://www.dho.ie/>

CONFERENCE REPORTS

THE JOINT CONFERENCE took place in Belfast from 29th April to 1st May, attracting more than 100 delegates from all sectors and from across the island – as well as representatives from England, Wales and Scotland plus some 20 exhibitors, from a wide range of library suppliers.

The very timely Opening Address was given by Paul Sweeney, Permanent Secretary in the NI Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in which he referred to the digital revolution that is radically changing both work and leisure. Libraries are often at the forefront of such change – not only as a vital information resource but also as a source of spiritual wellbeing. During difficult times, conferences like this help to lay foundations for the future. That future brings new challenges, of course, but new opportunities as well.

Irene Knox, Chief Executive of the new Northern Ireland Library Authority (<http://www.librariesni.org.uk>), further developed the theme of change when she spoke of the exciting times ahead for public libraries in the North. Key principles include regional planning, equitable provision, sharing best practice, community engagement and service delivery tailored to local need, in partnership with other local agencies wherever possible. Performance indicators and impact factors to show the contribution of libraries to government priorities are essential, as is substantial staff training and development to promote a shared common vision. Knox concluded that major change cannot be imposed: “you have to bring people along with you”.

Madelaine Dennison, Head of the Oireachtas Library and Research Services, picked up where Irene Knox left off by describing in detail the process whereby a reactive “members’ reading room” changed rapidly to become a pro-active information service. Library and research functions are now integrated to provide a seamless centralised service to users, with all staff having a client-facing role. Again, Dennison emphasised the need for impact factors to demonstrate value added and for staff training in core values and competencies.

The second day of conference began with Siobhán Fitzpatrick’s LAI Presidential Address which again referred to the current rapid rate of change. That has greatly facilitated the finding of information but it has also increased the need for skills of interpretation and evaluation. Lifelong learning, therefore, is recognised as a core activity by both LAI and CILIP. Co-operatively driven initiatives and easy access to e-resources are also key activities and Fitzpatrick cited several live projects which represent best practice e.g. Inspire Foyle, PAL, RASCAL. All library sectors – public, academic and special – on both sides of the border are contributing to such ventures. Indeed, co-operation and collaboration are essential to ensure our users can access the information they need, particularly in a time of

Annual Joint Conference 2009

reducing budgets: “let us continue to work together, to address change and to face the challenges of the future”.

Biddy Fisher, CILIP Vice President, spoke wide-rangingly of professionalism, ethical standards, codes of conduct and public good. The CILIP Body of Professional Knowledge (<http://www.cilip.org.uk/qualificationschartership/bpk>) distinguishes librarians from other professionals and helps us to identify the unique added value that we provide. Finally, Fisher predicted that compulsory CPD will be introduced by CILIP in order to ensure its members maintain the essential skills required by the ever-evolving work of the future.

Jane Ohlmeyer, Professor of Modern History at Trinity College Dublin, described a number of current initiatives to digitise historical resources from European libraries, archives and museums. Funding is available but Irish involvement is limited. Consequently, Ohlmeyer argued persuasively for a more co-ordinated strategy, sustainable national infrastructure and greater effort to supply content to Europeana (<http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>).

The COLICO Annual Lecture was given by Alistair McCleery, Director of the Scottish Centre for the Book, on the theme of ‘Small nation publishing’. In today’s global economy it is hard for small enterprises to survive so it is increasingly difficult to sustain the production of books by local authors on local topics. But public sector support for Scottish writers and publishers has successfully increased consumer choice there, whilst Canada – especially Quebec – has a thriving publishing industry due to intervention at both national and provincial level. McCleery concluded by suggesting that libraries have a crucial role in supporting such work.

Workshops on the second day were many and varied. They covered professional competencies and CPD; library and information research; strategic planning, service evaluation and Government support; building refurbishment, digitisation and One Book projects; partnerships between libraries and the BBC; provision of business information.

The final day saw visits to Bangor Carnegie Library and Belfast Central Library, both impressive and instructive in equal measure.

Overall, the Conference was extremely well-organised, interesting and informative. All the speakers showed real passion for libraries and librarianship, in their numerous guises. There was



Left to R: Margaret Forrest (CILIP Scotland), Katherine McCloskey (Belfast City Libraries), Siobhan Fitzpatrick (LAI) and Biddy Fisher (CILIP)



L to R: Elaine Urquhart (University of Ulster) and Alastair McCleery (Scottish Centre for the Book)

something for everyone, with a lot packed into just a short time. And it was very enjoyable too.

For conference photos see:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/philip_cohen/

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Working with others: Explore, Engage, Extend!

European Association for Health Information and Libraries Workshop, Dublin June 2009

IN JUNE 2009 the Health Science Libraries Group of the Library Association of Ireland, in conjunction with the Health Research Board, hosted the 2009 Workshop of EAHIL, the European Association for Health Information and Libraries. Held over four days in Dublin Castle Conference Centre, the Workshop attracted more than 260 delegates from over thirty countries.

EAHIL was formally established in 1987 to develop health information librarianship within Europe and to contribute to activities related to health information globally. EAHIL now has more than 1,000 members in over thirty countries and its activities focus on the organization of annual conferences, continuing education and publications including the *Journal of the European Association for Health Information and Libraries*.

In EAHIL's programme of annual events, Conferences and Workshops, alternate biennially. Workshops are distinguished from conferences by higher levels of delegate interactivity in the scientific programme with courses, small group activity and empowerment sessions being complemented by paper and poster presentations. Each EAHIL event also has a programme of Continuing Education Courses and it also hosts meetings of special interest groups in areas such as public health, pharmaceutical information and animal health. EAHIL events also function as a consultative forum for EAHIL policy making.

Background

Members of the Health Sciences Libraries' Section (HSLG www.hslg.ie) of the Library Association of Ireland (LAI) had become increasingly active in EAHIL and a number of years ago decided to bid to host an EAHIL Workshop for the first time in Ireland. HSLG had held a series of successful health information conferences in Ireland and hosting an international event was seen as an opportunity to further develop the skills and capacities of health sciences librarianship in Ireland. In bringing a prestigious EAHIL event to Ireland, it was hoped to encourage Irish librarians to participate in a major international event at home.

Planning began over three years ago with two teams concerned with organization and content. The Local Organizing Committee consisted of ten LAI HSLG members chaired by Louise Farragher (Health Research Board). The International Programme Committee comprising of a team of seventeen EAHIL members, including four from Ireland, was chaired by the present writer.

Crucial support was received by both teams throughout the project from a wide range of supporting individuals, institutions and sponsors across Europe.

Opening

The Workshop was formally opened by Ms. Suzanne Bakker, President of EAHIL and the opening address was given by the Minister for Health and Children, Ms. Mary Harney. Some highlights from the Minister's address included:

"Health services in Ireland are undergoing a transformation and information is important in any change process. Your job as information professionals is to assist in the conversion of information into knowledge and my job is to ensure that knowledge informs decision making. The transformation of Ireland's public health system is not only important from a patient's perspective but also from an economic perspective. In 2009, over 50% of the money the Irish government spends will be spent on our public health system. Public health systems are economically critical and it is a major concern for governments around the world as to how we provide a quality assured healthcare system within the resources available. No matter how systems are funded, publically, privately or both, governments across Europe are rightly concerned about the cost of healthcare.

Information is central to informing public opinion and to bringing patients along with change, particularly patient and advocacy groups. Ireland is currently concentrating cancer services from 30 centres to 8 large centres. Winning support for change can be difficult but information is critical to driving change. You as information scientists and librarians have a huge role to play. The message I have for you across Europe is that you should be active and proactive, by which I mean you should be knocking on ministry doors, bringing information that is important and relevant. Lobby groups of every kind, many commercial, assemble information in ways that suit them. Lobbyists have a role in government systems in Europe. However sometimes those who have the most relevant information are shy in presenting it in an understandable way. The message I leave from the world of politics and the ministries of health to you is not to be passive but to be proactive." (transcript from audio PM)

Programme

The programme of continuing education courses covered skills in a number of information retrieval areas, Web 2.0, marketing, and writing for scholarly publication.

The Workshop theme of “Working with others: explore, engage, extend” resulted in a programme with a significant number of collaborative workshop events, both large and small in scale. Notable contributions included sessions on collaborative working skills, presentation skills, reflective practice and interpersonal skills.

There were many papers presented on learning, literacy and information skills, reflecting the continuing interest among healthcare librarians in enabling healthcare professionals to further develop information competencies. Other substantial themes discussed were virtual environments, evidence based practice, and collaborative work initiatives. A significant number of contributions were received concerning bibliotherapy initiatives by public library services. In total there were 81 training, workshop, oral and poster presentations with over 105 contributing authors from 21 countries resulting in a comprehensive representation of current topics in health related librarianship and information work.

Irish participation

The workshop was a major collaborative exercise in itself across all participating countries. Within Ireland, the resources of HSLG and other colleagues were fully mobilised to provide the necessary support and effort to deliver the programme.

The following organizations provided generous support to the EAHIL Organizing Committee in the form of staff, facilities and services:

- Academic and Special Libraries Group, LAI
- Athlone Institute of Technology
- Dublin City Libraries
- Dublin University, Trinity College
- Health Research Board
- Irish Hospice Foundation
- Irish Nurses Organisation
- Library Association of Ireland
- Marsh’s Library
- National Library of Ireland
- Rotunda Hospital
- Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- Royal Irish Academy
- St Luke’s Hospital
- St Vincent’s University Hospital
- South Infirmary-Victoria University Hospital
- University College Dublin



Ms. Suzanne Bakker, President of EAHIL, above, and Paul Murphy, right, addressing the conference



Dr Conor Galvin (UCD) speaking during a plenary session, Thursday 4 June

L to R: Mary O'Doherty (RCSI) and Gabrielle Doyle (St.Luke's) at the Welcome Reception in City Hall



L.to R.: Enda Connolly (HRB),
Louise Farragher (HRB),
Beatrice Doran
(RCSI/Beaumont);
Mary Harney (Minister,
Dept. of Health & Children),
Suzanne Bakker (EAHIL),
Paul Murphy (RCSI) and
Dr. Stephen Simpson (SFI)



Against the background organisational effort, Irish librarians also found time to make substantive contributions to the scientific programme. Papers, posters, workshops and continuing education courses were presented by staff from the following Irish institutions:

- Blood Transfusion Board
- Dublin Public Libraries
- Dublin University, Trinity College
- Health Research Board
- Health Service Executive
- Institute of Public Health in Ireland
- National University of Ireland, Galway
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- Science Foundation Ireland
- University of Limerick
- University College Dublin

Such was the quality of this content that the international assessors made two awards to Irish contributors. Muriel Haire (Irish Nurses Organization) won the 'Best Paper Presentation' for her paper 'A national document supply cooperative among healthcare libraries in Ireland.' Susan Boyle (UCD) won the 'Best Poster Presentation' award for her poster 'Exploring and extending Information literacy support with Nursing and Midwifery students.'

Social programme and library visits

Dublin's major libraries opened their doors to EAHIL and these insights into our national collections were much appreciated by EAHIL members. Delegates were also offered a wide choice of social events and tours culminating in a gala dinner at the Mansion House.

Summary

The EAHIL Local Organising Committee, under Louise Farragher's chairmanship, undertook and managed an enormous multinational workload over a considerable timescale on a purely collaborative basis. With the support of EAHIL and LAI colleagues, they delivered a resounding success, demonstrating the capacity of Irish healthcare librarians to perform to the highest level, under circumstances of considerable pressure and severe resource constraints. The ability to innovate and to cooperate, demonstrated so well by the success of EAHIL in Dublin, will be essential skills as Irish librarians enter another period of reduced resources. The organising committee even delivered a week of glorious sunshine, the best of our Irish summer, demonstrating the power of positive thinking in the light of all odds!

Paul Murphy, Chair International Programme Committee, EAHIL Workshop Dublin 2009 and Deputy Librarian, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

Links

Hint: Health Information News and Thinking (2009) 7(1)
(available at <http://www.hslg.ie/files/HINT%20July%202009.pdf>)

Journal of EAHIL (2009), 15(3) features various articles on the Workshop including Minister Harney's address (available http://www.eahil.net/journal/journal_2009_vol15_n3.pdf)

Further content and fulltext of the Workshop Proceedings is available at <http://www.eahil2009.ie/>

NEWSPLAN “The Way Ahead” Seminar

Dublin 12th May 2009

THE NEWSPLAN “The Way Ahead” Seminar for Ireland was organized by COLICO (www.librarycouncil.ie/colico) in co-operation with the Joint Liaison Committee for Newsplan in Ireland. The event was hosted by the National Library of Ireland (NLI).

Forty delegates from academic, public and special libraries attended the seminar which focused on the future of the NEWSPLAN preservation programme for newspapers held in libraries and other repositories on the island of Ireland.

Aongus Ó hAonghusa, (Director, NLI) reported on developments of the NLI newspapers collection in the context of the NEWSPLAN programme. Robin Adams (Trinity College Dublin and Chair of the Joint Liaison Committee for NEWSPLAN in Ireland) gave a presentation on the achievements of NEWSPLAN and NEWSPLAN 2000. Roger Dixon (Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and Chair of UK & Ireland NEWSPLAN Panel) focused on the aims and objectives for the future preservation of newspapers on the island of Ireland.

Ed King (Head of Newspaper Collections, British Library) reported on the latest developments at the British Library for digitizing old newspapers. Details on the activities of the Newspaper and Periodical History Forum of Ireland (www.newspapersperiodicals.org) which is aimed at all interested parties in newspaper and/or periodical history were given by Mark O’Brien (Dublin City University).

Chaired by Robin Adams, the final session offered the opportunity for delegates to discuss the various issues raised during the presentations and to make the following comments and suggestions on NEWSPLAN and its activities:

- a) It was noted that the selection criteria for the digitization and microfilming of newspapers and periodicals are often based on demand. However, repositories and interested parties should try to balance their choices and include the preservation of titles at risk in their programme since this material offers invaluable historical resources. Particular attention should be given to unique titles which are not in the British Library Newspaper Collections.
- b) It seems that there is a lack of information amongst interested parties and the general public on the NEWSPLAN reports (1992; 1998) which provide the listings of newspapers and periodicals held in libraries and other repositories across the island of Ireland;
- c) The National Library of Ireland NEWSPLAN database is a great resource which could be enhanced and more widely known amongst interested parties and the general public;
- d) An audit of the current conditions of newspapers and periodicals across the island of Ireland should be carried out. The assessment could also include a review of the priorities originally set for Irish newspapers and periodicals;
- e) A NEWSPLAN marketing strategy could be developed. This would not only generate a wider usage of the material already digitized and microfilmed but could also support the seeking of further funding for the programme;
- f) NEWSPLAN could develop an advisory role on standards for digitization;
- g) NEWSPLAN could develop a role as co-coordinator of existing digitization projects, including developing a national hub of digitized resources with a schedule of digitization initiatives;
- h) NEWSPLAN could contribute to a digitization strategy for the Republic of Ireland; NEWSPLAN should liaise with LISC (NI) which have already submitted a draft digitization policy to DCAL and are developing a searchable database listing all digital resources available in Northern Ireland;
- i) It was noted that usage statistics for NEWSPLAN are not fully traceable but these data would document users’ interests and could support the selection process for further initiatives.

Domitilla Fagan is Secretary of the Joint Liaison Committee for NEWSPLAN in Ireland and Librarian, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council).

Innovative Users' Group Conference 2009

THE FIRST JOINT European Innovative Users Group/Irish Innovative Users Group (EIUG /IIUG) conference was held at Blanchardstown Institute of Technology on 25th and 26th June 2009. The IIUG is a user group for Irish Innovative Interfaces Incorporated (III) customers. This group includes Clare County Library, the Institutes of Technology, UCC and TCD. The EIUG is our European Counterpart. EIUG attendees were mostly from public and academic libraries in the UK. The conference concentrated on the Millennium library system of which all attendees are users. The conference was attended by eighty-nine delegates.

Graham Woodruff (III) spoke about new developments with Millennium, including the concentration on the development of future functionality in the Encore web based interface rather than the Millennium Java interface. He also outlined a new patron application programming interface (API) that will let Millennium talk to other systems, such as financial systems, student registration etc with real time updates. Also mentioned was the introduction of print templates, allowing the addition of local images, and layout for a customised print notice, and the Content Pro product. Content Pro looked interesting as it has the capacity to allow library members to add content, such as photographs or pod casts, to digital collections.

During the conference there were opportunities to attend workshops based on the functions of the library system. These included III's, Circulation, Web OPAC, Systems, Serials and Cataloguing. I attended the Systems workshop, where delegates had a frank exchange with representatives from III.

I also attended the Web OPAC workshop where the University of Durham's use of content from Google books in the bibliographic record was described.

Alan Brown (Bury Council Public Libraries) outlined their strategy for sending welcome e-mail notices to new members. This has the benefit of checking that the e-mail address that has been supplied by the new member is correct, and gives the member the option of receiving all notices from the library in electronic format. This cuts down on the library's overheads while opening up a new channel of communication for the library to its members.

Technical difficulties included the organisational e-mail server not recognising the library server's mail address as a valid destination for bounced e-mail. A solution to this was found by

using the Microsoft exchange mail server of the organisation, with an inbox for library server mail, as the destination for bounced mail.

While this was a technical conference, topics of broader interest were included: library space/planning, institutional repositories and Freedom of Information.

James Mitchell, Library Architect, gave the keynote address on the multifunctional use of space that the contemporary library requires. In order to secure the most from the public tender process, he suggested it might be wise to engage an architect in the process of creating the specification to accompany the tender documents. Mitchell reassured us that design by committee does work and that successful design projects often involve 30 -40 people. He warned that if a competition is held, the result is an applied idea. Instead, a conversation with the architect will lead to a better solution for all. He also observed that refurbishment is up to 30% dearer than a new build. The speaker recommended the following libraries as buildings that librarians should look at and consider

Delft Library
Malmö library
State Library Berlin

William Nixon (University of Glasgow) and Niamh Brennan (Trinity College Dublin) spoke about their experiences of implementing Institutional Repositories. These are *Enlighten* and *TARA* respectively. The most challenging aspect was reported to be achieving user buy-in. Institutional repositories were set up in both locations, but getting academic members of staff to submit voluntarily to the repositories is proving harder than was first thought. Another issue raised was the amount of library staff and time that needs to be committed on an on-going basis, including cataloguing librarians and staff to ensure that the copyright conditions of publishers like Science Direct are met when articles are deposited.

In contrast, Yvonne Desmond (DIT) spoke about both their repository projects: *ARROW@DIT* and *ArtLog*. Arrow is the institutional repository for DIT and includes electronic theses. In order to foster participation by academic staff, champions of the repository were selected and they get a monthly report on the usage of the materials that they have contributed. This has been very good for the library, as it raises the library's profile with the academics, and increases the usage and citations of their

research. The success of the project is based on an institutional mandate for academic staff to deposit in the repository.

ArtLog is located in the Tyrone Guthrie Centre and artists are being encouraged to enter details about themselves and the creative process they use while attending the centre. As this is sensitive information it operates on a stand alone machine, and is not currently available online. The demonstrations of both systems were very informative.

Terry O'Brien (Freedom of Information Officer, WIT) gave a broad ranging session on Freedom of Information. As well as outlining FOI compliance issues, the following interconnected topics were highlighted: Data Protection, Records Management, Archives, Copyright and Plagiarism. He also drew our attention to the fact that even Post-it notes stuck on documentation can be considered subject to FOI! So, use Post-its at your peril!

Lightening Source gave a product presentation about their print on demand service, and the Espresso Book Machine®, which can be placed in libraries, book shops and other locations. They are working with 6500+ publishers and have over 1 million titles in their database. They work with Amazon as printer and shipper for the harder to source titles.

Rice Majors (III) spoke about ratings, reviews, tagging, providing enhanced discovery and access points, as well as allowing libraries to build communities and foster participation. He also mentioned that Encore can harvest from institutional repositories making it a single access point for the researchers in an institution.

The conference closed with reports from the IUG (Innovative Users' Group) conference in Anaheim, California. Attendees Ramona Riedzewski (Trinity College Dublin) and Karen Stevenson (University of Glasgow) reported on their experiences. Highlights for them included the IUG clearing house, where members share add-ons, scripts and tips for extending Millennium, and gathering information about how to get the most for Millennium and the web opac from robots, spiders and crawlers.

Many new ideas were generated during the conference and delegates understanding of the capabilities of the Millennium library system was expanded.

Niamh Walker-Headon is Systems Librarian, ITT, Tallaght



Blanchardstown Institute of Technology

Conference reports 5

Book to Button: Transitions in Library Service Delivery

February 2009, Dublin

SOME EIGHTY DELEGATES attended the annual seminar of the Academic and Special Libraries Section (LAI) held on 12 February 2009 in the Radisson SAS Hotel.

The theme related to new technology and its implementation and efficacy in a variety of different library and information environments. The aim of the seminar was to explore such questions as: Do librarians have a 'digital strategy' that sets out how information professionals – and others – interact with new technologies? What technologies have most shaped librarianship? And what technologies will take it into the future?

The event was structured around a number of keynote speakers, as well as several case studies demonstrating the transition in library service delivery.

Jenny Craven (Centre for Research in Library and Information Management (CERLIM) at Manchester Metropolitan University) was the first keynote speaker, with a talk entitled *New trends in technology: exciting ways of working?* Or are they widening the digital divide? She considered how new and emerging technologies were having an impact on the digital divide – defined as the gap between those with effective access to digital and information technology and those without. She focused on technical issues – such as infrastructure and ensuring accessibility – and issues relating to information literacy. Key considerations must be ensuring adequate access to technology, and to training and education in the use of such technology. She encouraged consideration of the holistic approach to accessibility – consider what your users will get out of using the technology. She spoke also of the work of CERLIM and some projects being undertaken which can help address digital divide issues.

The second key note speaker was Adrian Arthur (Head of Web Services, British Library) who spoke about the British Library's exploration and use of Web 2.0 technologies. Web 2.0 sites focus on sharing, communities, user-generated content and greater levels of interactivity. Using such technologies has allowed users be more participative in how they engage with the Library's collections. For example, blogs are used to provide users with details of ongoing projects, such as the Harold Pinter Archive. RSS feeds inform users about current events. Using a 'mash-up' (bringing together content from two different sources, particularly websites, in order to create a new platform to display content), it was possible to provide details about the sacred texts collection held by the Library and from where they originated, using Google Maps. Adrian noted that British

Library users often know more about what the Library holds than those who work there! Mobilising users allows the Library to create resources that they would not otherwise have the funds to deliver. For example, users can provide comments and extra information on sound recordings that form part of the Library's archive – these are then available for all users to view and search.

The day also featured four case studies.

James Molloy (University College Dublin) presented a case study entitled *The production process and promotion of video in UCD Library integrating Web 2.0 and social networking technologies*. This covered the development of 'how-to' videos of services that would be relevant to students: Express Service (in the Library), Laptop loans, Library Induction. Additionally, students were interviewed about their experience of UCD library, and the resulting video was put on Facebook, with a very positive response.

Forward to the Old Days: Designing Web Services for the Law Library, presented by John Duffy (Law Library), looked at the potential for developing a 'Barrister's Desktop' which would try to emulate the traditional physical space of the Law Library in a virtual environment. A single sign-on would allow the barrister to access digital collections of documents, electronic resources, an area where they could store their own files and documents and an instant messaging service. This is currently a development project, with some elements designed to be enabled in the near future.

Georgina Byrne (South County Dublin Library Service) provided an account of setting up a digital book service within a public library context in her case study: *Digital Books: Expanding the Reading Experience*. This was a comprehensive account of researching the digital book market and service providers, dealing with technological issues such as compatibility with the library management system, identifying the correct format for hosting the digital material and ensuring staff had the appropriate skill sets to administer the service. The service has had outstanding results with about 400 issues per month from a collection of about 3000 digital books. The books can now be downloaded to iPods and are compatible with Sony e-Reader.

The final case study was given by Jane Burns (Irish Taxation Institute) and was called *Developing a Single Source File: the*

Integration of Print and Electronic Formats. The process of integrating the ITI's publication programme and their electronic TaxFind resource was described. The ideal outcome was to develop content that could be simultaneously used for the printed publications as well as the TaxFind product. Issues that had to be considered included user expectations (wanting the online product to be exactly the same as the print copy with added functionality), the importance of formatting (when dealing with legislation, where formatting has an inherent significance) and the technological issues (finding a solution that would not limit future development and ensuring any decisions made were future-proof). In such an exercise it is important to begin by structuring the content and then decide on presentation. Jane suggested working backwards from the intended search results and this will give you the path, and deliver the information how your customer wants it – not how you think they should get it.

Overall the day was challenging and stimulating and provided a combination of food for thought and practical suggestions in the area of new technologies within library services.

Áine O'Connor, Academic & Special Libraries Committee.

Managing Electronic Records

William Saffady. London: Facet Publishing, 2009.
ISBN: 978-1-85604-699-2. 244pp. £52.95. Pbk

MANAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS is now in its 4th edition and provides the reader with an overview of both theory and methodologies for actively managing all forms of electronic documents and media. It should be stated from the outset, that the book is essentially geared towards the novice, and begins with outlining the case for managing electronic records, and the concept of the 'information life-cycle'. Time is also spent discussing different types of electronic media from magnetic discs to optical formats. A full chapter is devoted to the various types of electronic files from text files and images to visual and audio recordings.

Saffady adopts a very methodical approach to the whole subject area beginning with the need to develop a complete inventory of both record types, and the actual characteristics of each



different record type. He also focuses on key issues such as record management software, file management and labelling, and authentication of electronic data. Other topics covered include risk management procedures to ensure the ongoing maintenance and protection of vital records described as "information essential to an organization's mission".

One of the longest chapters is devoted to regulations on the retention of electronic data. While the chapter is very comprehensive about retention policies and procedures, its value is diminished for the reader outside the United States by the fact that there is a heavy focus on legal requirements in the US. From our perspective, an overview of EU legislation in this area would have been useful.

In general, the book is informative and organized in a systematic way which makes it highly beneficial to readers with little experience in managing e-records. There is also probably something here of relevance to all librarians, and for the more experienced user it is easy to use on a 'dip-in, dip-out' basis, and certainly encourages one to consider issues such as record retention, risk management and planning for obsolete technologies. On the whole, it is a basic but useful read.

Caitriona Sharkey, Senior Manager-Knowledge Services, Ernst and Young

Regionalism and the Reading Class

Wendy Griswold. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
ISBN 978-0-226-30922-4. 208pp. \$29. Hbk.

WENDY GRISWOLD is a professor of sociology, comparative literary studies and English at Northwestern University, Illinois, and her title alludes to Thorstein Veblen's *Theory and the Leisure Class*. This beautifully produced volume collects some of the author's articles on reading, readers and regionalism, consolidating a sustained engagement with the topics, including the infrastructures developed by publishing and reading. Librarians in Ireland will be familiar with the importance of reading groups and book clubs, for example, which were part of its revolutionary history (Whelan, 1993).¹

There are interconnected, iconoclastic themes. In the Globalization thesis, as the world becomes increasingly homogenized, regional differences are flattened. Griswold suggests otherwise and argues that aspects of regionalism are "flourishing". Contrary to the



Decline of Reading thesis, there is a section of "committed readers" in societies, an "elite" that is "modest in size" but having extensive cultural influence. Griswold goes further: the rise of regionalism, and of a reading class, is connected. The reading class perpetuates regionalism through cultural consumption, particularly the reading of regional literatures. Forget the death of the book! In the Internet age, this reading class reads more, not less. Sections on the effect of government sponsorship of writers and

in-depth analyses of "regionalist literatures" (Italy, Norway, US) make a profound contribution to local studies librarianship, which now has a research-based, conceptual model for looking at local writing. This will be essential reading for librarians organizing 'Irish' literature, including among the Diaspora and county-based literatures.

This excellent book questions assumptions about the so-called 'Information Society' and will reassure librarians wary of any impending demise of books. It will become a standard for librarians; for teaching librarianship; Internet studies; and the history of reading.

Andrew Carlin, School of Information and Library Studies, UCD

1 Whelan, Kevin (1993), 'The United Irishmen, The Enlightenment and Popular Culture', in David Dickson, Dáire Keogh & Kevin Whelan (eds.) *The United Irishmen: republicanism, radicalism and rebellion*. Dublin: Lilliput Press: 269-296.

Renewing our Libraries: case studies in re-planning and refurbishment

Edited by Michael Dewe. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2009. ISBN 978-0-75467339-2. 302 pp. £60 (£54 online).Hbk.

THE TIMELINESS OF THIS BOOK is opportune indeed. It is a timely and fitting tribute to its editor, Michael Dewe, who died just before Christmas 2008, and whose knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, library building design will be greatly missed; it is timely in a period of economic downturn when funding is hard to come by and advice on how best to maximise assets is invaluable; and it is timely when sustainability is firmly on the agenda and guidance is needed on how to re-use and update existing library buildings whilst retaining both their character and embodied energy. Under the guidance of an editor whose knowledge of library architecture was honed through his work with the IFLA Library Buildings & Equipment Section and his membership of the Public Library Building Awards judging panel, the contributors to this publication have shown how existing buildings can respond and adapt to new demands and new models of service despite the inevitable problems faced.



These problems and solutions are discussed through a series of sixteen case studies recording successful library refurbishments in the late 1990s and the early years of the 21st century. The examples chosen include eleven public (two in the Republic of Ireland), three university, one national and one independent library. Preceding the case studies is a chapter by Michael Dewe

giving an overview of the key drivers for refurbishment and outlining the major policies, campaigns and funding initiatives that have led to the improvement of library buildings. These include, amongst others, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's *Framework for the Future 2003* report, the launch of the Designing Libraries database and gateway to library design information (later incorporating the SCONUL Library Buildings Database), the MLA audit of English public library buildings, the Public Library Building Awards, and the Love Libraries campaign.

The case studies are presented in five parts covering heritage buildings, new styles of provision, remaking university libraries, extending the library, and library refurbishment templates. Each of the case studies, regardless of category, examines the reasons behind the refurbishment programme, the design process, the eventual solution arrived at and the resulting library service delivered. Particularly helpful is that the problems encountered along the way are discussed, and evaluations of the projects are provided.

The penultimate chapter of the book looks at some further examples from within and outside the UK, and the final chapter pulls together common themes, issues and problems from the preceding case studies. These include the need to assess present condition, to consult widely, to think strategically, to acquire funding and to compile a good brief. Dewe stresses the importance of location which can often be the deciding factor in weighing up refurbishment versus new build and discusses the entire process of design issues from the setting out of objectives through to evaluation of the outcomes. The book concludes with a select bibliography and a list of helpful websites.

This is a useful publication which complements Dewe's previous book on *Planning Public Library Buildings* (Ashgate, 2006) and Ayub Khan's *Better By Design* (Facet, 2009), both of which deal with designing new library buildings. A minor gripe is the quality of the photographs and the paucity of plans but this is a book that anyone setting out on a library refurbishment project should read.

Karen Latimer, Medical & Healthcare Librarian, Queen's University Belfast Medical Library.

Going Beyond Google: the invisible web in learning and teaching

Jane Devine and Francine Egger-Sider. London: Facet Publishing, 2009. ISBN 978-1-85604-658-9. 162pp. £44.95. Pbk

THE INVISIBLE WEB, that part of the web not accessible via a Google or other general-purpose search engine search, is the focus of this thought-provoking book from Jane Devine and Francine Egger-Sider of the Library Media Resources Center, LaGuardia Community College, New York.

Addressing themselves mainly to academic librarians and teaching faculty, Devine and Egger-Sider take us through an introduction to the Invisible Web, suggesting ways in which we can teach our students about its presence and its value. Librarians in general will learn a lot from the book's well written descriptions (chapters 1, 6 and 7) of how the web works, and of the differences between general purpose search engines, vertical search engines, directories and databases.

The text is divided into three parts:

1. Understanding the Division between the Visible and Invisible Web;
2. Finding and Utilizing the Contents of the Invisible Web;
3. Narrowing the Gap between the Visible and Invisible Web

At the beginning of Part 2 the book came alive for me as I relaxed into the knowledge that the authors never intended, as I had feared they might, to suggest that we should attempt to replace Google in our students' affections with the invisible web. Instead, they suggest that we begin information literacy initiatives on common ground where students are already comfortable, and later use that common ground to introduce students to the much greater riches available in the 'deeper' (or invisible) web.

Three stages are recommended by Devine and Egger-Sider for the teaching of the invisible web:

1. Web Searching Basics
2. Presenting the Invisible Web
3. Presenting a more complete picture of the riches of the invisible web.

The concepts within each of the three stages are mapped by the authors to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Information Literacy standards.

The book is at its weakest in its promised provision of 'expert teaching tips and scripts for informal instruction, plus model activities and assignments for the classroom'. In the worked examples in chapters 4 and 5, for example, no conclusion is drawn by the authors as to whether one interface provides better information than another for the student's purpose. The authors recommend simply that students should not limit themselves to one interface. Examples which more clearly demonstrated greater quality and not just quantity from invisible web sources would have made for a stronger book, as would more structured suggestions for evaluating results.

However, the book's central thesis, that as long as a gap exists between the visible and invisible web we librarians, as intermediaries, "must play a role in presenting students with a full portrait of the information world as it is today" is a strong one, and the book is a worthy effort at assisting us in its stated endeavour.

Aoife Geraghty, Librarian, Research Support, University of Limerick



Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library

Edited by Bernadette Cunningham and Siobhán Fitzpatrick; picture editor Petra Schnabel. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2009. xi, 302pp. npg. (info from website, €55). Hbk

THIS MONUMENTAL, YET ENTIRELY ACCESSIBLE, collection of essays will provide an insight into a library which, for many in Ireland outside the sphere of academic research, remains somewhat unknown. The book is in twenty-four chapters, each pertaining to material held within the Library's collections. In her Introduction, the Librarian, Siobhán Fitzpatrick, outlines the history of the physical library as well as providing detailed information on the acquisition of some holdings, including such notables as the Halliday, Charlemont and Ordnance Survey collections.

Several major themes are discernible within the Library's collection. Early and medieval Gaelic manuscript material, perhaps the subject area for which it is most famous, fittingly provides the central themes of five chapters as well as being mentioned in several others. These include the contribution by Dáibhí Ó Cronín on what is arguably the Library's best known "Treasure", *The Cathach*. Ó Cronín outlines the history of the manuscript before it was deposited in the Academy Library in the nineteenth century. A feature of this and other contributions is the highlighting of manuscripts or artefacts in other repositories, notably the National Museum of Ireland, which are directly related to the Library's material. The other notable contributions on Gaelic manuscripts include those of Pdraig Ó Riain on the *Stowe Missal*, John Carey on compilations of lore and legend such as *Leabhar na hUidhre*, and Máire Herbert writing on devotional medieval manuscripts in which she notes both continuities and discontinuities from the earlier Irish manuscript tradition. John Scattergood's contribution continues the medieval theme but relates instead to two service books, which contain prayers in Latin, French and English. Chapter 5, by Timothy O'Neill, provides a succinct but welcome discussion on the materials from which the manuscripts are made. At its founding, scientific pursuits were central to the research work of the Academy and this is reflected in the themes of three of the chapters. The multi-disciplinary nature of the Library's collections is reflected in Chapter 9, in which Aoiobheann Ní Dhonnchadha, outlines the history and significance of *the Book of the O'Lee's* and other medical and astronomical tracts. *The Book of the O'Lee's* is an Irish translation of a Latin medical text, thereby placing it in the Gaelic manuscript tradition but also within the realms of scientific enquiry. The scientific theme is continued by Thorburn Burns' contribution on the Library of one of the Academy's founders, Richard Kirwan, and also by James P.

O'Connor writing on the Library's renowned Natural History Collections.

It could be argued that almost all of the contributions refer to material of significance to historical scholarship. There are several chapters providing detailed accounts of collections central to this theme. Pdraig Ó Macháin's chapter on bardic poetry material included in the Library's Irish manuscript collections offers us a glimpse into the world of the professional poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Chroniclers of events are also the theme of Bernadette Cunningham's contribution on *Annals and other histories of Ireland*, in which she notes that "the historical memory of the Gaelic lordships of

medieval Ireland is encapsulated in the annals and other historical texts that have been preserved". Raymond Gillespie, in his piece entitled *Early Modern Manuscripts in English and Latin*, refers to material which depicts both the political and religious nature of Ireland during this period. James Kelly mentions, in his chapter on *Eighteenth Century Historical sources in English*, that the greater availability of manuscripts for that century in Ireland is ultimately attributable to the extended usage of the written word. Interestingly, Brendán Ó Buachalla, on the other hand, states, in his piece on *Eighteenth Century Irish manuscripts*, that "until the Irish Revival of the later nineteenth

century, the printing press had but a fitful and insignificant impact on the creation and dissemination of writing in Irish". Both his and Pdraig Ó Macháin's second chapter, on Irish manuscripts in the nineteenth century, bring us into the world of the scribe, whose work, by the nineteenth century, was entering its final phase. The Irish language theme is brought to a conclusion by Bernadette Cunningham's chapter on *Twentieth-century Irish language collections*.

Specific collections, of value to researchers in many fields, are treated by Thomas Bartlett in his chapter on *Halliday's pamphlet collection* as well as the contributions on the libraries of Thomas Moore, John Windele and Thomas J. Westropp by Siobhan Fitzpatrick, Mary Cahill and Aideen Ireland, and Mairéad Ashe Fitzgerald, respectively.

The wonderful array of material for topographical research and travel is represented by chapters on the *Ordnance Survey maps and manuscripts* by J.H Andrews and the drawings in the collection by Peter Harbison. Angela Byrne's piece on *Princess*



Dashkova and the Wilmot sisters not only represents material on the Irish abroad but also an opportunity to hear the voices of women from the past. Finally, Nicholas Carolan outlines the important music material within the Library, including notational music, research notes and correspondence.

Each chapter is provided with footnotes while there is a valuable bibliography of both primary and secondary sources. Mention must be made of the range and uniformly high quality of the illustrative material which is the real star of this publication. The one drawback experienced by this reviewer was the abrupt nature with which some of the chapters came to a conclusion, leaving the reader wanting more. Perhaps, in a sense, this means that the book has fulfilled its ambition of becoming, as Nicholas Canny states in his *Foreword, a vade mecum* to scholars at home and abroad who may not have previously known of the Library's collections.

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Making the most of RFID in Libraries

Martin Palmer. London: Facet Publishing, 2009.
ISBN 978-1-85604-634-3. £44.95. 135pp. Hbk.

IN HIS PREFACE the author notes that while RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) is no longer the latest thing on the block and is being adopted by libraries around the world at a very rapid rate, it is a dynamic technology whose future development is impossible to predict.

This book serves as a very useful introduction to this dynamic technology for those interested in the implementation of RFID in libraries. It covers the history and use of RFID in libraries and in the wider world. The discussion continues with how RFID can be integrated with typical library processes and outlines problems which may need to be considered such as RFID integration with the library management system, RFID standards, interoperability, privacy issues and health and safety concerns.

Perhaps the most useful aspect of the book is its proposal that the implementation of RFID can be a catalyst for change in the delivery of efficient and effective library services. The author makes the case that the most successful RFID installations use the technology as part of a wider initiative rather than simply as an end in itself. A proposed implementation offers the opportunity to rethink service delivery from start to finish. Thus the business case can and should be based on this broader context rather than on narrow implementation of RFID technology and any efficiencies it can deliver.

Preparing a business case based in this wider context is covered as is the preparation of a request for proposals and the systematic evaluation of offers received is covered.

As the author has pointed out RFID is a dynamic technology which will most likely change as it develops. He has provided a concise but useful "Further Information" section where up to date information may be sought along with a list of suppliers of RFID technologies.

A library manager interested in maximizing the benefits of an implementation of RFID will find in this book a most useful yet succinct tool.

Kieran Swords, Senior Executive Librarian, South Dublin County Libraries.



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The Library Association of Ireland is the professional association for librarians in Ireland and represents librarians working in all types of libraries and information centres. The Association aims:

To promote a high standard of education for librarianship in Ireland by evaluating and giving recognition to degrees, diplomas or other professional qualifications in librarianship, and by conducting courses of study, setting examinations to test the proficiency of candidates, and issuing diplomas.

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Applicants should submit the following to the Education Committee

- Completed Application Form
- Outline of continuing Professional Development (not more than 500 words)
- Supporting relevant documentation
- Fee of €100

Full details are available on the LAI website at:
www.libraryassociation.ie

Or contact: The Secretary, Education Committee,
Library Association of Ireland, 53 Upper Mount St., Dublin 2

Email: education@libraryassociation.ie

Library Association of Ireland Education Committee

2009 Personal Membership Renewal Form

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News from the stacks

Mellon retrospective cataloguing project at Trinity

College Library

August 2009 saw the conclusion of the Mellon retrospective cataloguing project at Trinity College Dublin. The Mellon Project was established in 2005 to convert the records in two of Trinity College Library's older catalogues to online records by matching entries with good quality records available from external on-line databases. The project was funded by the generous help of the Andrew W Mellon Foundation matched by Library funds. The two catalogues, the Printed and Accessions Catalogues, contain entries for books catalogued before 1963. Initial recruitment of a Project Manager, an Assistant Librarian and four Library Assistants was increased to include two additional Library Assistants in 2007. The project was guided at all times by an internal steering committee. Significant developments throughout the life of the project, most notably the availability of the Printed Catalogue Online directed the group to focus on the Accessions Catalogue (1873-1963). Before the project commenced the records were only available for consultation in the 436 stand-alone volumes located in the Iveagh Hall in the Berkeley Library.

Records were sourced from two databases: RLUK and OCLC. Where no record was found an original record was created. By doing so the project has significantly contributed to international cataloguing with the creation of over 7,000 records. These records are now available for use by librarians worldwide and illustrate the importance of the collections held in TCD. Initially, the team focused on fragile volumes which were in need of vital conservation work before working through the catalogue alphabetically. The team sourced over 340,000 records all of which are now available online via TCD's new Millennium Library catalogue (<http://library.catalogue.tcd.ie/>) Contact: Shane Mawe, Mellon Project Manager. smawe@tcd.ie; 01 8498547

Google Book Search Settlement

The Library Association of Ireland is happy to endorse the EBLIDA draft position statement especially in relation to

- Monopoly
- Control
- Privacy
- Censorship

Most of our specific concerns have already been addressed in the EBLIDA text. However, we are concerned that the impact of the settlement on European authors and publishers and the possible effects of the latter on libraries. EBLIDA represented the LAI at the European Commission's Information Hearing on the Google Book US Settlement Agreement in Brussels, 7th September 2009. The text of the EBLIDA position statement is available at <http://www.eblida.org/uploads/eblida/10/1252227760.pdf>. The

verbal intervention by EBLIDA at the hearing is available at <http://www.eblida.org/uploads/eblida/10/1252505068.pdf> IFLA and LIBER also made presentations. At the time of writing, a Fairness Hearing is scheduled to take place on October 7th 2009 in the New York Southern District Court. Latest information will be available at <http://www1.nysd.uscourts.gov/index.php>

Vienna Declaration

At the joint conference of EBLIDA and NAPLE Forum in Vienna (May 2009), the Vienna Declaration was agreed. The conference called for the strengthening of the role of public libraries in Europe. Full text is available at http://www.conference.bvoe.at/docs/Vienna_Declaration.pdf

PEOPLE

Congratulations to the following who have recently been appointed as University Librarians:

- John Cox at NUIG
- Dr. John Brooks Howard at UCD

Congratulations also to Professor Diane Sonnenwald who is Professor at UCD School of Library and Information Studies.

Professor Mary Burke (SILS) is retiring this autumn. Best wishes to her and other colleagues who have retired in recent months.

Mary Burke Research Scholarship in Information and Library Studies

On the occasion of her retirement and to thank Mary for her many contributions to information and library studies, the Mary Burke Research Scholarship in Information and Library Studies is being established. The purpose of the fund is to provide financial assistance to research students on MLitt/PhD programmes who have demonstrated financial need. Mary's intention is that the scholarship should encourage students to undertake research in Library and Information Studies. These range from Irish students who need financial support to students from developing countries. She wishes to prioritise particularly the needs of students from Irish Aid partner countries, e.g. those currently listed at <http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/countries.asp>. For those who would like to contribute to the Scholarship fund, more details are available at <http://www.ucd.ie/sils/MBscholarship.doc>



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