

An Leabharlann

THE IRISH LIBRARY

Second Series Volume 12 Number 4 1996

- * Future of Northern Ireland's Public Libraries :
A Symposium
- * Art Exhibition Catalogues
- * Libraries in Washington
- * Reviews
- * Recent Publications
- * News

An Leabharlann

THE IRISH LIBRARY

ISSN 0023-9542 Second Series Volume 12 Number 4 1996

CONTENTS	PAGE
Editorial	115
Art Exhibition Catalogues – a Resource for Art Documentation <i>Olivia Fitzpatrick</i>	117
Impressions of Library Services in King County, Washington <i>Deirdre Ní Raghallaigh</i>	123
Crossroads? A Symposium on the Future of Public Libraries in Northern Ireland <i>Liam Parker, Gerry Burns, Kirby Porter, Anne Peoples, Beth Porter</i>	129
Information Matters: News and Notes	145
Obituaries: Brighid Dolan, Mary Moore	155
Recent Publications	157
Reviews	
● William J Martin, <i>The Global Information Society</i> (<i>Ian Cornelius</i>)	164
● Hans Prins and William de Gier, <i>The Image of the Library and Information Profession</i> (<i>Agnes Neligan</i>)	165
● William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, Mairead Dunlevy, editors, <i>Donegal History and Society</i> (<i>Nodlaig Hardiman</i>)	166
● Jennifer MacDougall, <i>Information for Health</i> (<i>Margaret Haines</i>)	169

An Leabharlann

THE IRISH LIBRARY

Journal of the Library Association of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Branch of the Library Association

Editors: Kevin Quinn and Fionnuala Hanrahan.

Editorial Advisory Board: Jess Codd, Penny Holloway, Agnes Neligan.

Prospective manuscripts for inclusion in the journal should be sent to:

- * Fionnuala Hanrahan, Dublin Corporation Library HQ, Cumberland House, Fenian Street, Dublin, 2, Republic of Ireland. Tel: +353 1 661 9000. Fax: +353 1 676 1628. E-Mail: fmhan@iol.ie
- * Kevin Quinn, South Eastern Education and Library Board, Library HQ, Windmill Lane, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, Northern Ireland, BT24 8DH. Tel: +801238 566 434. Fax: +801238 565072

Books for review should be sent to:

- * Agnes Neligan, The Library, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Republic of Ireland. Tel: +353 1 708 3880. Fax: +353 1 628 6008. E-Mail: aneligan@may.ie

Contributions for Information Matters: news and notes should be forwarded to:

- * Fionnuala Hanrahan, Dublin Corporation Public Library Service, Cumberland House, Fenian St., Dublin, 2, Republic of Ireland. Fax: +353 1 676 1628. E-mail: fmhan@iol.ie
- * Mary Kintner, South Eastern Education & Library Board, Windmill Hill, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, Northern Ireland, BT24 8DH. Fax: +8 01238 566 433.

Marketing Managers: (*Subscriptions, Advertising, Back Issues*)

- * Anne Murray, The Library, Dublin City University, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, Republic of Ireland. Tel: +353 1 704 5205. Fax: +353 1 704 5602. E-Mail: murraya@ccmail.dcu.ie
- * Desmond Preston, Western Education & Library Board, Fermanagh Divisional Library, Hall's Lane, Enniskillen, BT74 7DR, Northern Ireland. Tel: +8 1365 322886. Fax: +8 1365 324685.

Subscriptions: IR/STG £20.00 per annum.

Back issues: IR/STG £5.00 per issue.

Advertising rates are available upon request.

Publisher: Library Association of Ireland / Northern Ireland Branch of the Library Association

Designer: David Cooke

Printer: Shanway Press, 461 Antrim Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT15 3BJ

Volume 12 Number 4 ISSN 0023-9542

© 1996, Library Association of Ireland / Library Association, Northern Ireland Branch

© Copyright in articles and reports is vested in each of the credited authors in respect of his or her contributions, 1996.

No part of this journal may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher, or of the author in the case of credited articles and reports. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of information contained in the text, illustrations or advertisements. The opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Editors or the publisher.

Editorial

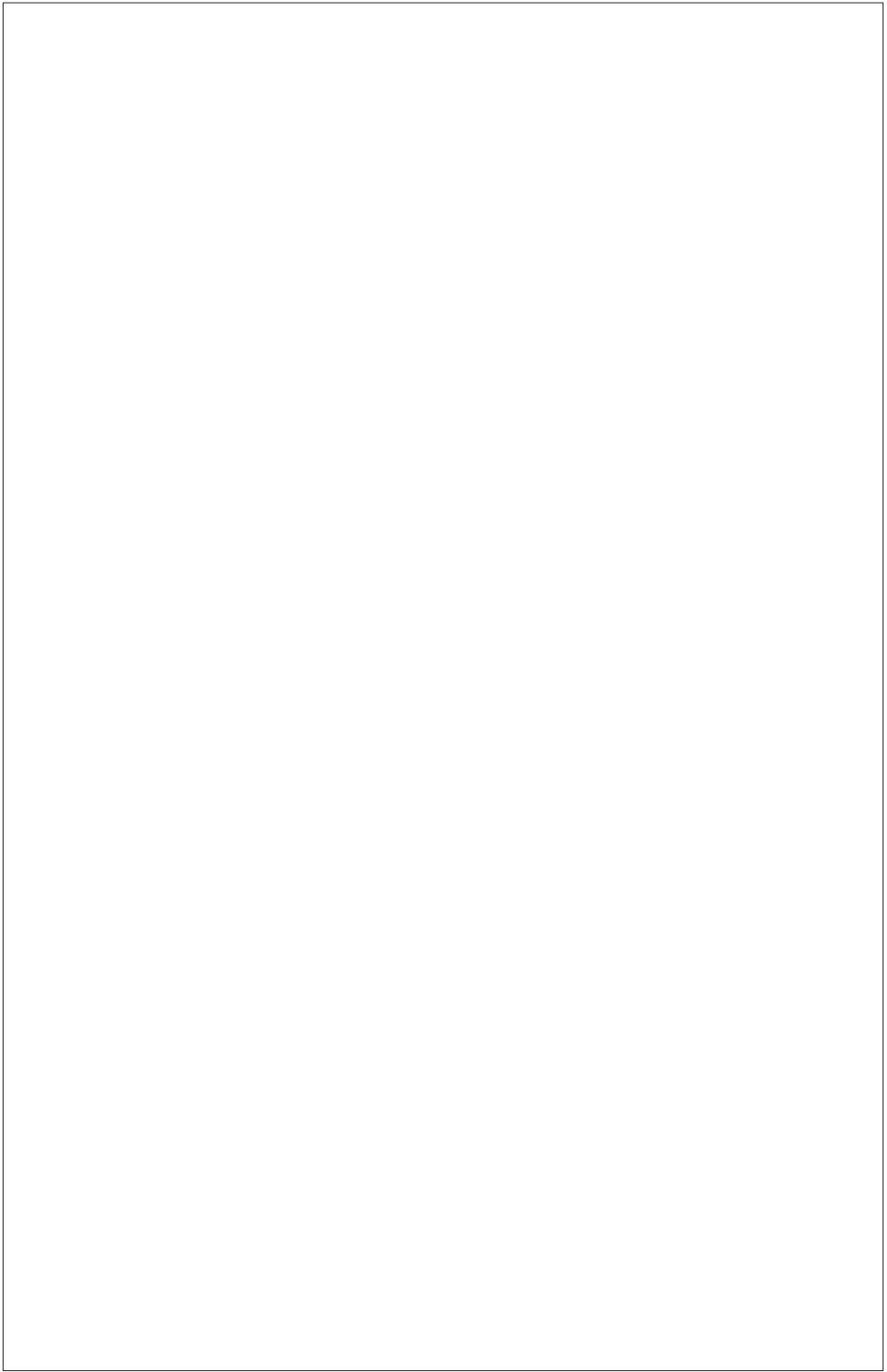
PUBLIC LIBRARIES are in a state of crisis. The briefest of surveys reveals a picture of deteriorating book stock, inadequate buildings – the notable exceptions here serving only to underline the all too familiar, slightly to well foxed norm – and a staff demoralised by a mixture of poor career opportunity and low pay. This crisis is the worse, the less likely of resolution, for its being undeclared. Until the true situation is acknowledged, and the extent of the crisis revealed, the continued survival of the very idea of a Public Library – the availability of significant collections of books to all-comers, free of charge – is under threat. Public Libraries urgently require a campaign of advocacy to funders and opinion makers. This is not a time for minor adjustments, small discrete innovations. A flurry of localised activity can, indeed, conspire to conceal the fundamental structural problems.

The major problem – perhaps the only problem – is that of funding. There are two challenges here : to re-negotiate the library's share of local authority funding and to seek out – whether this be in the EU, from the private sector, Arts Councils or local development initiatives – new funding allegiances. The profession seems beset by a chronic modesty of ambition. This, allied to an apparent lack of appetite for political manoeuvring, leaves one nervous about the future.

Within the context of Northern Ireland's Public Libraries, many of the above concerns are currently being brought into focus by proposals for change announced by the Department of Education Northern Ireland. Needless to say, the changes are not of libraries making. The system is to be overhauled, it seems, as a largely unconsidered afterthought to a more wide-ranging 'Review of Educational Administration in Northern Ireland'. Whether this review leaves the average branch library better or worse off depends on the quality and coherence of libraries' input into the new structures which will emerge. A huge challenge lies ahead. In this issue five leading librarians give their view of how they see the future. It is our hope that these contributions will help fuel a debate, a debate whose quality, we believe, will determine whether the present period of change will result in the beginning of a fightback or the continuation of decline.

Elsewhere in this issue, we give Deirdre Ni Raghallaigh's account of a summer working in an American Public Library system including, as it does, much that is timely and instructive and also Olivia Fitzpatrick's overview of the management of art exhibition catalogues which, we trust, will be of interest to both specialist and generalist alike.

Fionnuala Hanrahan & Kevin Quinn
Joint Editors



ART EXHIBITION CATALOGUES

a resource for art documentation

The collection and recording of art exhibition catalogues is a topic which has interested many beyond the specialist field of art librarianship. This paper surveys the topic and details latest practice.

OLIVIA FITZPATRICK

EXHIBITION CATALOGUES are a vital resource for any researcher in the visual arts. They are also among the most elusive, ephemeral and undervalued of reference materials. There is no bibliographic control structure. Many catalogues are considered too slight to come under legal deposit regulation or are classified as trade literature. Print runs are small and short-lived, and often the very existence of a catalogue can only be guessed at from reviews of exhibitions in the art press. This paper reports on studies of the problems of collecting and recording such material in libraries and, at the same time, is a plea for greater awareness in the wider library community of the value of exhibitions and the need to collect catalogues locally. In response to requests from non-specialists it also provides some definitions of the terminology of art exhibition catalogues.

AVAIL Initiative

The Association for the Visual Arts in Ireland (AVAIL) is concerned that some co-operative effort should be put into a collection or recording structure for art exhibition catalogues and to this end organised a seminar on the subject at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin in November, 1993. Edward Murphy, Librarian of NCAD, who chaired the meeting, outlined his experience of collecting catalogues and the ancillary material often produced by exhibitions – invitations, press releases, pricelists etc. over a period of 15 years. Links have been established with galleries and with individual artists, art critics, staff and students of the College. Library staff check for press announcements of exhibitions and attend as many as possible. One member of staff spends half a day per week on the collection of current material but retrospective collecting is even more time-consuming and difficult, especially for exhibitions of Irish artists abroad.

This account is from a specialist library and such commitment would be difficult to sustain outside this context, but at the seminar there was considerable support for the pragmatic suggestion from Patrick Long, Monaghan County Museum, that even to 'keep a cardboard box and throw catalogues in it' would at least preserve the material for donation, barter, exchange or eventual recording when the time and expertise was available. Most of those present would be willing to collect material in their local area and to encourage others to do so. Dr Muriel McCarthy, Marsh's Library, felt that the public library service had the ideal network and local knowledge for the task. Many public libraries were

supportive of art and hold their own exhibitions.

In many institutions art exhibition literature, because it is flimsy, difficult to shelve and to catalogue, is not recorded. At present AVAIL has no proposals for a major initiative in this area. It is believed that it would be unrealistic to embark on such a project at this stage. Edward Murphy brought his library's copy of the Checklist of British Artists in the Witt Library which lists the artists on which information is available with entries such as '1 box, 1 file'. This was seen as an adequate finding tool in spite of the absence of detail and could provide an eventual model for any list of catalogue resources in Ireland.

ARLIS Initiative

AVAIL was fortunate in being able to refer to a very detailed and extensive feasibility study of the subject: *ARLIS/UK and Ireland National collecting network for art exhibition catalogues: a feasibility study*, undertaken in 1990 by Gaye Smith and Lotta Jackson (of the then Manchester Polytechnic Art, design, and Humanities library) as a British Library Research Paper 87.

This study was funded for 15 months from June 1988 by the British Library with Manchester Polytechnic as the host institution. The principal objectives were to identify participants for a collecting network, to identify catalogue producers and the nature and frequency of their output, to compare problems of catalogue collecting between the capital and provincial areas and to produce a bibliographic record of catalogues published in England during the survey period on a database which could be continued after the survey. The database eventually included 1590 catalogues and was published and distributed to collectors.

The need to collect such material was undisputed and was, in fact, reinforced by the survey, but it concluded that the setting up of a permanent collecting network based on volunteer libraries would demand too much extra work from those involved and could never hope to be comprehensive or have any long-term sustainable future. Only a full-time paid organiser would be in a position to devote the time and effort required for the task. Since the publication of the study, the National Art Library has employed a curator (equivalent to an assistant librarian) to work on locating exhibition catalogues and there are discussions under way for a British Library initiative on cataloguing such material. No source of funding has yet been found for the recommended paid organiser.

The AVAIL meeting studied the findings of the feasibility study closely, referring to the detailed reports and statistics assembled for it and the methodology of the research. However, members came to the conclusion that, however difficult it might be to undertake such a project in Britain, the Irish situation, because of its relatively much smaller scale and the consequently increased possibilities for personal contact among participating librarians, should make some collecting system possible. The 1993 meeting refrained from reaching any prescriptive conclusions and there are plans to return to the topic shortly when members can report on any individual initiatives they have tried in the light of increased awareness of the subject. Scottish art librarians are also considering using the advantage of their smaller local scale to devise a recording network for Scotland.

Exhibitions

An art exhibition is normally the temporary display of one or more works of art brought together for their intrinsic interest (but also, perhaps, for the purpose of sale, propaganda or the encouragement of the participants). The majority are of fine art, painting and sculpture, and most are of paintings, although of course they can be of historic subjects (for example recent Famine exhibitions), decorative arts and craft, book arts, or photography.

Exhibition catalogues

The exhibition catalogue is a record of the exhibition which continues to connect its components long after they have been dispersed. In the case of some modern exhibitions by 'artists in retreat from the object'¹ – exhibitions which do without works altogether and take the form of happenings, performance art, land art or installations – the catalogue, where it exists, is the only tangible form they ever take. Exhibitions are now often arranged as design statements, where the design is as important an element as the individual work. Here the catalogue preserves a record of the environment in which the works appeared (see for example Pauline Bewick's *The Yellow Man*. RHA Gallagher Gallery, Dublin, January 1996.)

The word catalogue itself has several definitions in the art context – the most important for the work of any artist being the catalogue raisonné. This is the systematic, critical and descriptive listing of all of an artist's known works with details of title, date, signature, size, medium, location, provenance, bibliography etc. The 3-volume *Jack B Yeats: a catalogue raisonné of the oil paintings* by Hilary Pyle is a typical example. Dr. S.B. Kennedy's *Irish Art and Modernism*, originally a doctoral dissertation, was re-worked for publication and then had a catalogue section appended and an exhibition (at the Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin and the Ulster Museum, Belfast in 1991) based on the text. Here the exhibition catalogue is also an in-depth monograph. These types of exhibition, and the great international loan exhibitions, are usually prepared and mounted by curatorial staff or other experts in museums or large public galleries and the large and well-produced catalogues published by them or in collaboration with a publisher are as accessible as any other books in the art trade. They appear in Whitakers, are reviewed in the journals and publicised by the publishers.

It is the one-person shows of new or retrospective work, the exhibitions of work for sale by commercial galleries, the group shows (*Image Woman Text*, organised at University College Cork by the Cork Women's Political Association), the exhibitions of Irish artists' work abroad, the design and decorative arts exhibitions, (e.g. *Art and Design Matters*, University of Ulster at the Ulster Museum, 1993) the commercially sponsored exhibitions (Aer Rianta's annual *Gateway to Art*), groups of young or emerging artists, the summer festival exhibitions and all the other local (*Living Landscape*, annually at West Cork Arts Centre, Skibbereen), and national (*ROSC Irish Exhibition of Living Art*) exhibitions which produce catalogues, private view invitations, pricelists etc, which are of most concern to us here. These can range from a single photocopied sheet available free at the time of the exhibition to more substantial publications, with some or all of the standard components of a catalogue – introduction, appraisal of the artist's work, interview of artist's

statement, list of works, biographical details, bibliography, list of collections containing the artist's work etc. Ideally they also contain reproductions of some of the works on display.

Such ephemeral publications are the backbone of most art libraries' collections. They provide information on an artist's development, on the relationships and influences between artists, on the early work of a well-known artist, or they may be the only record of the work of a young artist. There is no simple rule of thumb for selecting from the many young hopefuls who exhibit every year those artists who will go on to make a substantial reputation, and whose early records will be eagerly sought by researchers, buyers, sellers and publishers. The librarian who could do that would be missing a prosperous vocation as an art dealer. We are therefore committed to collecting as widely as possible in this area.

In the case of commercial galleries the purpose of the catalogue is to help sell the work and these galleries have little interest in depositing their catalogues with libraries. Libraries are effectively 'collecting the crumbs from a table laid for somebody else'². Museums which collect catalogues usually record and store them for the use of their own curators and do not easily make them known or accessible beyond their own institution. Artists are aware of the mutual benefit in preserving and recording their catalogues but usually keep incomplete records and need to be constantly reminded to send their catalogues to libraries.

Problems

Once the material has been located it is daunting and difficult to catalogue. Publication details are often sketchy. Although relating so closely to their time and place, they often appear without dates. A random check for the purpose of this paper found up to 30% with no year of publication. They can be untitled, have unfileable symbols as titles or uninformative titles with the artist's name as the title for all his exhibitions. They are too small, too large or too awkward to be shelved with other books. They can come as posters, place mats, or boxes of postcards. The recommended solution from Beth Houghton, Tate Gallery Library, London, is not to catalogue at all, but to file in alphabetically arranged artists' dossiers. She recognises that this is not an ideal solution but it has the virtue of making the material quickly available for consultation.³

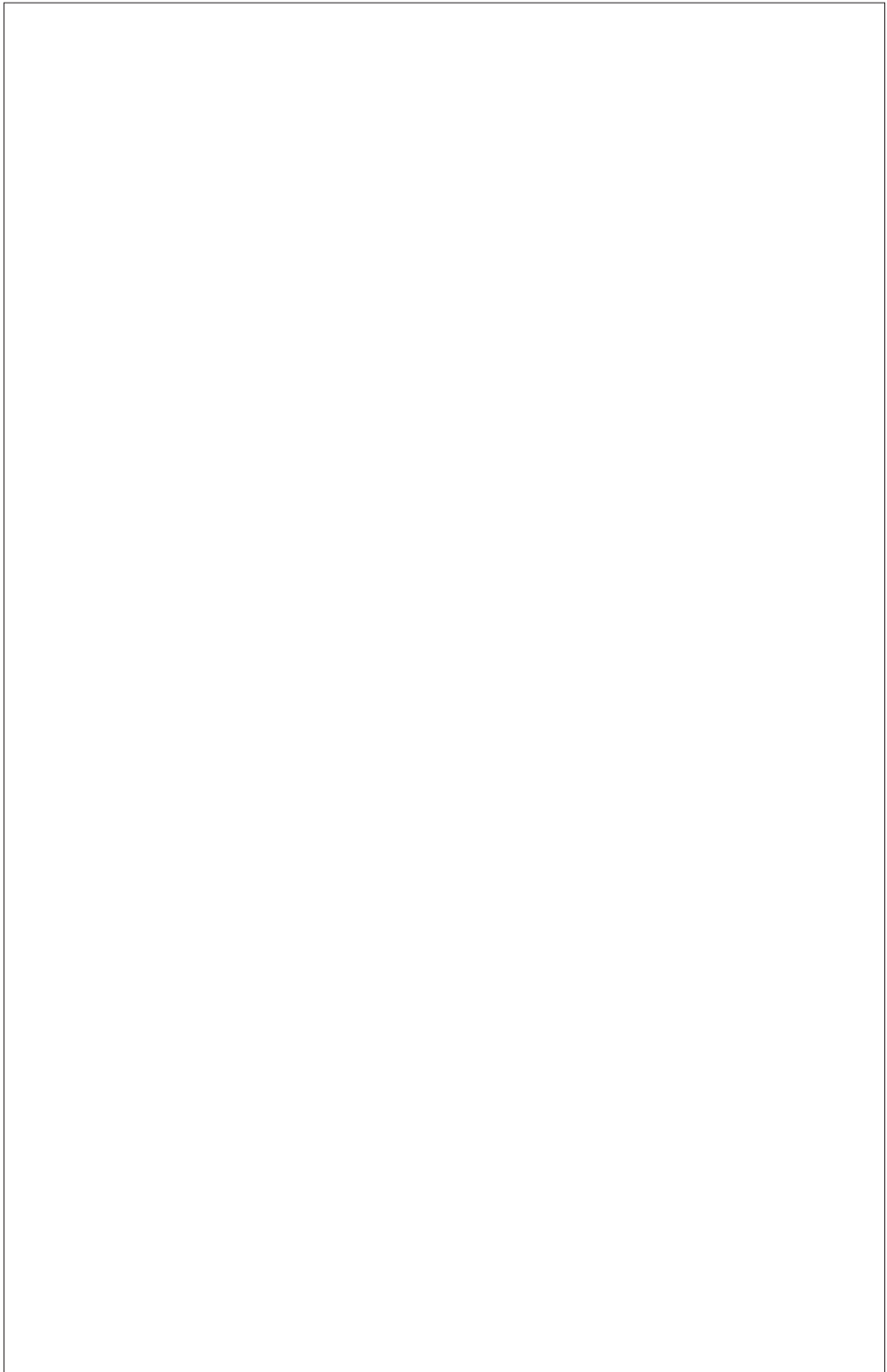
The bottom line

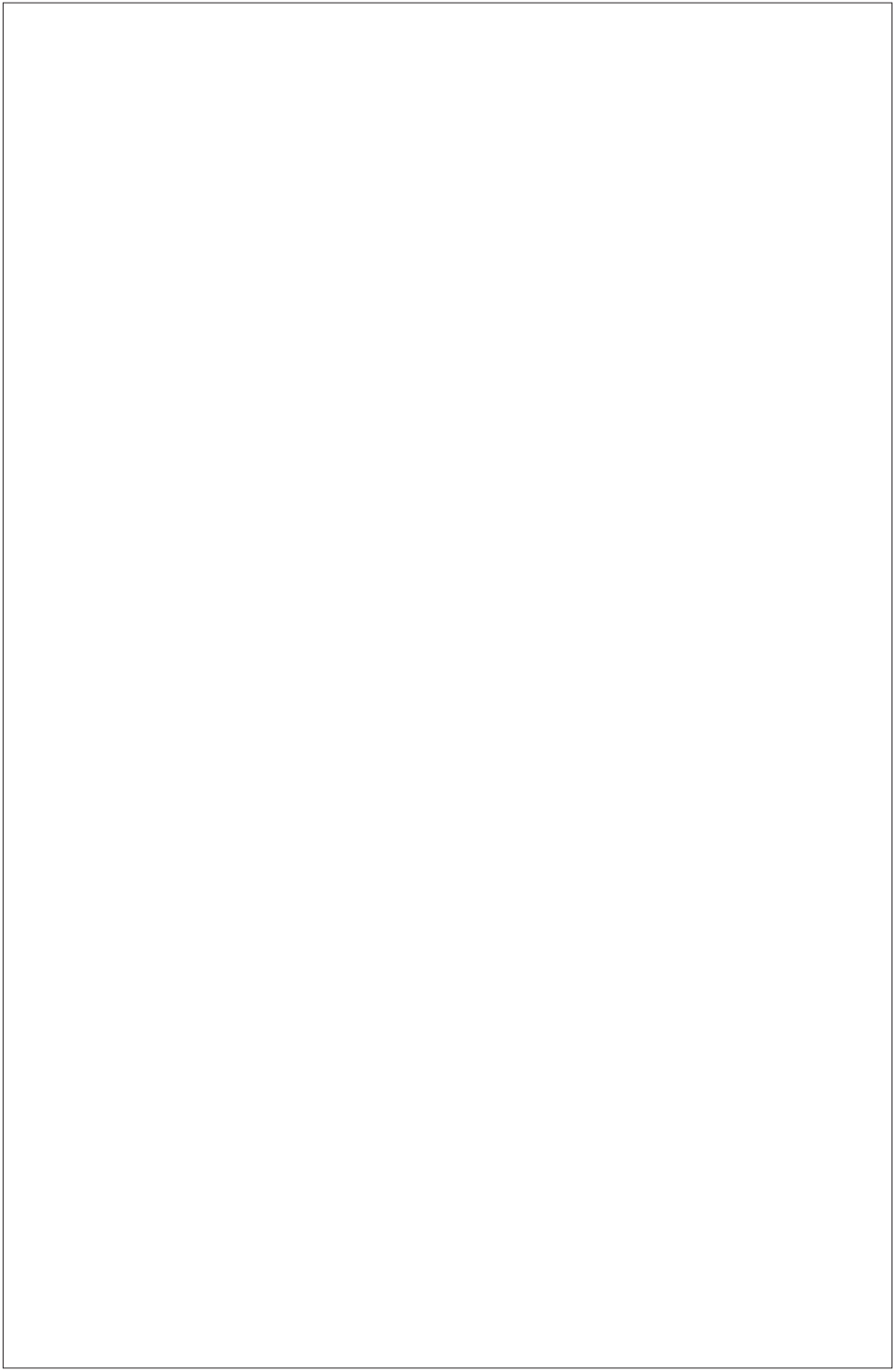
The AVAIL initiative has already led to the establishment of some informal collecting networks and the Association asks for volunteers with energy and ideas to extend these and promote the initiative further.

References

- (1) Beth Houghton. The documentation of contemporary art in *Art Libraries Journal*: Vol 5, No 3, 1980, pp 12-25.
- (2) Krzysztof Z. Cieszkowski. Viewpoint in *Art Libraries Journal*: Vol 6, No 1, 1981, pp 3-6. (3) Beth Houghton op.cit.

Olivia Fitzpatrick is a sub-librarian at the University of Ulster, Belfast, in charge of the Faculty of Art and Design Library. She is a founder member and Joint Chair of AVAIL.





Library Services in King County, Washington

DEIRDRE NÍ RAGHALLAIGH

This paper describes a three month job exchange in an American Public Library system. It focuses attention on matters of funding, staffing, customer care and reference services.

LIKE TO SPEND THE SUMMER IN WASHINGTON STATE, USA? The advertisement which appeared on our staff noticeboard last Autumn leapt out at me. Dublin Corporation Public libraries had received an application for a three month job exchange from John Sheller, a librarian with the King County library system. Too good an opportunity to miss so I applied and was accepted quite quickly. The arrangements which seemed daunting at first – suitable dates, swapping homes, arranging payment of bills and salaries, provision of petcare and obtaining vehicle insurance all fell into place very quickly. So it was that I found myself in June 1995 working in Federal Way Regional Library, King County, Washington State.

King County

Washington State is on the Pacific North West Coast. It is bordered by British Columbia (Canada), Oregon and Idaho. It has an area slightly smaller than the Republic of Ireland with a population of over 4 million. The city of Seattle has a similar population to that of Dublin City – 516,000 – but it has a sprawling hinterland in the Puget Sound area where most of the population of the State lives. Washington was frontier country until relatively recently. It only obtained statehood in 1889. But in recent years its economy has been booming with companies such as Boeing, Microsoft, Nordstroms and of course, for the caffeine addicted, Starbucks coffee shops. These all have attracted newcomers to the area. I was often struck when talking to library customers and staff that few of them were originally from the state.

King County Library System

King County is the area immediately surrounding the city of Seattle but excluding the city itself. The library system was established in 1942 and serves 1 million people living in 2,000 square miles of urban, suburban and rural communities. The service is provided to unincorporated parts of King County and, by contract, to incorporated areas or cities within the area. King County Library services have been expanding rapidly in recent years. Six new branch libraries were opened in 1993, two in 1994 and two by the time I left in Autumn 1995. 23 incorporated areas or districts opted by popular vote to annex to the

King County Library system. KCLS is now the fifth largest circulating library service in the USA. The rapid expansion can be seen in these figures taken from the 1994 annual report:¹

	1984	1994	%change
Circulation	6,015,080	12,287,434	104.3
Card Registration	350,000	834,617	138.5
Collection	1,510,329	3,098,000	105.1
Collection Budget	\$ 2,214,926	\$5,641,609	154.7
Operating Budget	\$17,967,500	\$33,377,218	85.8
Staffing	293	520	77.5
Square Footage	309,754	470,432	51.9
Population	760,000	980,000	28.9

Funding and Charging

The library system is funded from the property tax paid by residents. The rate is fixed at a maximum of 50c per \$1,000 valuation. This fund is specific to libraries so the library director is in the happy position of not having to compete with other services such as roads, fire or education. (Neighbouring library systems unfortunately do find themselves in fierce competition for funds). In 1966 and 1988 the residents voted in special bonds for the construction of new library buildings and acquisition of new materials. This rating meant that every rate paying customer knew exactly how much he or she had contributed to the library service and was as quick to point this out to the staff. This leads to a more heightened expectation of library services than is common in Ireland. One of the stated principles of service is to “provide free access to, and promote the communication of, ideas and information”.² There are therefore no charges for joining the library, borrowing any type of item, requesting material or printing out from databases. Overdue fines depend on the type of material borrowed. Borrowing privileges are suspended when fines pass an agreed ceiling.

The Staff

‘To attract and develop a high-quality staff with special skill, knowledge and abilities to help library users. Create an environment which motivates staff to achieve high levels of performance and productivity’³

Staff organisation struck me as quite different from that practised in public library systems in Ireland. Staff are interviewed and appointed by the branch manager to a specific service point. They move only if appointed to another vacancy in the KCLS system. There is a sharper distinction between the various grades than is perhaps common here though this would be less true for the smaller branches. Pages (usually high school students or part-timers) shelve, file and arrange books, Library assistants manage the circulation routines, check materials in and out, and collect fines. Librarians deal exclusively with reference questions and information enquiries. The branch manager is responsible for a relief fund

and spends it as is needed. Many of the positions thought permanent are 20 hour or 30 hour positions. The number of shorter hour positions seem to suit the system as it facilitates flexibility in timetabling, which is especially important in a branch opening up to 67 hours a week. Shorter hour staff are not disadvantaged as they are still entitled to full benefits which is not necessarily the norm among employers in the United States. Staff praised working conditions, particularly in comparison with the difficulties encountered by library staff in States such as California where tax initiatives had cut library funding to the bone.

Staff Communications

Communication to and from upper layers of management is particularly effective. In such a geographically diverse organisation staff from different branches may not get the opportunity to meet frequently. A newsletter called *The Weekly Memo* is circulated to all staff. The newsletter contains information on permanent and substitute positions, building work undertaken, all branch statistics, summaries of comments and complaints received from the public, procedural changes and minutes of all meetings held in the system, including budget meetings conducted by the director, public service meetings between branch managers and meetings of library assistants. Potentially controversial items are included. This ensures that all staff are informed quickly of impending issues and probably short circuits the rumours which can circulate in any large organisation.

Customers

King County Library Service is very conscious of giving library customers quality service. Their customers are used to this high standard from other service providers such as shops or restaurants. The issue of library and all local government funding is debated regularly at election times. Library topics are covered extensively in the local media. The Board of Directors of KCLS meets in different libraries around the system and these meetings are well attended by members of the public. Issues such as censorship, children's access to certain materials and the purchasing policy are debated passionately. There was extensive coverage given to a controversial sculpture in the grounds of the Kirkland branch which many considered objectionable. There is a palpable sense of ownership of and concern for the public library service which is missing here in Ireland. Free provision at the point of use does not equate with low expectations of the library service. The library services provided to other areas by contract are voted on by the public. If accepted, this increases their rates. Obviously they will not vote to accept a service they consider inferior. Public support for libraries appears to be quite widespread. Thirty of the libraries have friends groups. These groups fundraise and promote events for the libraries. In Federal Way Regional (the branch in which I worked) volunteers came in to file, shelf check, arrange journals dust and help with certain events. Books, periodicals, videos, cassettes, CDs and lately multimedia CD-ROMs are all available for loan as well as slide and overhead projectors and sound systems. There is no upper limit to the amount of material which can be

borrowed. Larger libraries have extensive multilingual sections responding to the needs of recent immigrants and ethnic minorities. Federal Way has a significant number of Korean, Russian and Vietnamese immigrants using their facilities.

Developments

The Year 2000 plan 4, as well as providing for new buildings, also provides for increasing public access in the following ways:

Opening hours: These were increased. 16 Libraries now open on Sundays some of them until 9pm.

Rapid Reserves: Shortly before I visited, KCLS was forced to discontinue a longstanding policy of posting out reserved items to customers' homes. This was due to high increases in postage charges. This decision generated a lot of angry feedback. A rapid transport system between branches was initiated. A requested item in stock at another branch in the system should be at the customers branch within 1-2 working days.

Infonet: The Puget Sound area has a very computer literate and relatively affluent population. Most library customers have computers at home. *Infonet* allows remote access to the library catalogue 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Using their library card number and a personal pin number patrons can check on materials, place holds, and check their own record for loans, fines etc. They can also do searches on the full-text databases of magazine, newspaper and business articles provided by IAC (Information Access Company). *Infonet* also acts as a gateway to the Internet, giving a menu of access to around 17 sites. It is a very popular service. 333,708 dial-in calls were made to the service in 1994. *Infonet* is available at kcls.lib.wa.us. Work is proceeding on www access.

Internet access: This is also available on some terminals in the branches. While used frequently in the branches in which I was working it did not prove as popular as I anticipated, perhaps because www or e-mail was unavailable. Internet training classes given by one of the librarians were provided weekly and were always fully booked.

Answerline: This is a phone reference service available 7 days a week. 3-4 library associates sitting around a carousel of common reference material take calls ranging from hours of opening of various branches, renewals, and short reference enquiries. Customers call to check on spellings, bus routes, where Jimi Hendrix or Bruce Lee are buried or who lives at a certain address. The only restrictions are that the enquiry cannot take more than 5 minutes. They deal with an average of 650 enquiries a day.

Reference Services

'Recognising the primary role of Information Services in the mission of the King County library system, it shall be the goal to provide access to *accurate* and *timely* information of a *consistently* high level throughout the library system'⁵

In allocating resources to the various classifications of libraries within the system, stock and staff were provided to the largest libraries to act as reference backup for the other libraries. Libraries are classified as small, medium, large, resource and regional according to size of building, hours of openings and size and depth of the collection. In the regional libraries reference librarians take reference enquiries on telephone lines dedicated to the other branches. Articles and photocopies from reference works can be faxed directly to the smaller library or to the library patron within certain limits.

Quality: Consistent with the overall interest in quality of services provided, an in-depth study was conducted by an outside agency in all branches in 1994. 68% of questions, a comparatively high percentage, were answered completely and accurately but KCLS undertook to give all the librarians and staff in smaller libraries training on taking reference enquiries in an effort to boost the accuracy of the replies. Librarians were trained as trainers. The programme was called SMART, *Training Skills for More Adept Reference Transactions*. I was fortunate enough to take part in this training. Library staff were encouraged to monitor the way they themselves and others conducted reference interviews and always to ensure that the customer had his or her question answered completely.

Library Ethics

‘Provide open, non-judgemental access to collections and services without regard to race, citizenship, age, educational level, economic status, religion, or any other qualification or condition’⁶

Perhaps an unfortunate “advantage” in Ireland of having stagnant or declining book funds is that the librarian is not faced with the ethical dilemmas that libraries in the States face regularly. If we cannot afford basic material such as the daily newspaper, we need not agonize overlong over the purchase of controversial material. Library literature in the States reflects the plethora of groups trying to have material withdrawn for various reasons – from depictions of sex or violence, to those who object from a racial, religious or politically correct standpoint. The purchase of *Playboy* magazine for Federal Way Regional led to a public outcry, public meetings and coverage in the press. The journal was not withdrawn. Children may borrow any book, magazine or video from the library without staff interference. The principal of open access to collections is staunchly defended.

Services not Provided

Computer learning facilities common now in many Irish libraries were not in general available throughout KCLS, probably because computers are such an everyday item there. All businesses and schools and most homes have access to information technology. Outside groups and bodies use the meeting room facilities to a far greater extent allowing less time for staff organised events. The provision of two to three tutorial or seminar

rooms for private or group study was common in many of the larger and newer branches. KCLS provides no comprehensive local history service. King County itself is a very recently developed area and there are well developed local history collections in nearby Seattle and Tacoma Public Libraries.

Conclusion

Working in a foreign public library system gave me a great insight into the contrasting provision of services in King County Library System and the system in which I work. Initially I focused on the differences, the different sources and ways of accessing information. KCLS is undoubtedly better funded and more technologically advanced but more and more I came to see the similarities. They like us are dealing with the growing availability of information in different formats, in educating their borrowers and in preparing their service for the future.

References

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| 1. King County Library System
1994 – KCLS 1995 | 2. The Year 2000 Plan – KCLS
1988 (revised 1993) | 4. <i>ibid</i> |
| | 3. <i>ibid</i> | 5. <i>ibid</i> |

Deirdre Ní Raghallaigh, BA, DLIS is Senior Librarian, Dublin Corporation Business Information Centre

CROSSROADS?

A symposium on the future of public libraries in Northern Ireland

LIAM PARKER, GERRY BURNS, KIRBY PORTER, ANNE PEOPLES, BETH PORTER

The announcement in June from the Department of Education Northern Ireland that the present five Education and Library Boards are to be replaced by three ushers in, whether or not the final legislation assumes this exact form, a period of uncertainty and change in a public library status quo which has held since the setting up of the Boards in 1974. Whether this change is seized as an opportunity or endured as a threat will depend, to a considerable extent, on the response from the library community. Here five leading practitioners give their views of the present situation and express their hopes for the future.

AS EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS contemplate the painful process of slimming down from five to three, I have been asked to give a personal view of the future direction of public libraries in Northern Ireland.

Public libraries have much to be proud of during the twenty-odd years since the last reorganisation. The 1970's reorganisation was a radical alteration with new political structures, new colleagues in education and new responsibilities for public libraries.

The present proposed reorganisation, in contrast, is simply a tidying up exercise to save money. There is no new vision or new direction, no new powers, new structures.

During those twenty-odd years the public library has become a more professional place. All the old buildings have been adapted or abandoned. New buildings, for branches, for schools, for headquarters abound. Great strides have been made in bringing library services to the housebound, disadvantaged, school children and students.

Business information, local history groups, art shows, homework centres and further education classes have found room, space and a home in the public library. The service has been analysed and reported upon by consultants, consumer councils, efficiency experts, internal and external auditors. I should feel that we are in the rudest of health.

Yet increasingly, I find at the bottom of all this activity a question which has not been answered. What are public libraries for? Also, I sense that many people who work in libraries have lost confidence in the public library's ability to function as a public service. There is little agreement among staff on the kind of strategic and/or operational plan which we should be seeking to put in place for the next stage of development. I believe that this stems from the same lack of vision and understanding of functions.

How many roads are there at the crossroads? I can see three which are, and perhaps always have been, on offer – education, information and entertainment. In very broad terms, we see our service to children as educational, our information provision is aimed at businessmen, students, researchers etc and our general lending and special services are regarded as entertainment.

Taking the last point first, entertainment is provided at the level of the lowest common denominator, being increasingly populist and market driven. Does any public library in Northern Ireland have a selection policy which includes literary merit? How much money or staff time do we contribute to arts/literary festivals? Are we all still issuing books in the same manner to the same groups of people we did thirty years ago? Is a Mills & Boon loan the same as a Roddy Doyle or Seamus Heaney loan in our annual reports? *Turning over a new leaf*, the recent General Consumer Council report, shows that the primary perception of the role and function of the public library among users, non-users and library staff is that a public library is “a place which provides a range of popular reading materials to borrow”. Is this the perception with which we are going to go down the road to the twenty-first century?

Increasingly, I believe quality information services will become very difficult to maintain. The capacity to provide accurate up-to-date information will be restrained by the cost of that provision. Information, at its highest level, will only be available at a high access cost. If we wish to travel this route and be a leader, then free access at the point of delivery must come under examination. A debate on private-public partnerships, co-ordination of resources and joint ventures with other information providers is essential.

Lastly, we look down the educational road. In Northern Ireland we have an unusual situation in respect to the rest of the British Isles. We are controlled and administered by boards whose other primary function is to ensure the provision of education. You might, then, reasonably expect a number of joint service ventures and experiments in service provision to have resulted from this close link. This is not really the case and I don't know why. There has been a steady growth in school libraries and they are increasingly gaining recognition for their importance in educational provision. Public library services to children and further and higher education remain essentially the same as they were before the formation of the Education and Library Boards. Perhaps a smaller number of new authorities will seek to develop ways of co-operation. There is still the possibility of creating a new partnership and offering the remainder of the British Isles models of provision and services which other authorities would find exciting and interesting.

How are we to proceed along our chosen road? The book is not the be-all and end-all of education, information or entertainment. We must ask ourselves whether we are in the business of the delivery of knowledge or in the business of storing and lending books. The book has been a vehicle which can be used on all three roads and I wonder whether this accounts for librarians reliance on it.

This confusion about our role is peculiar to the public library. Libraries in firms, government departments or universities have a very clear definition of their function within their organisation. The crossroads at which the public library stands may be the same crossroads

at which all public services in the UK currently stand, confused, agentised and underfunded.

If we alter our services using only a value for money framework which seeks to save money by merging boards, we will have missed an opportunity to alter the model of the public library as it currently exists in Northern Ireland.

In truth, we shall probably stagger or shuffle along all three roads simultaneously, as we do at present, our service evolving gradually until the way forward becomes clearer. I, for one, hope that it is not primarily as a provider of popular reading materials. For the moment, however, and for the foreseeable future, I feel, we shall have to rest content with being purveyors of “educational infotainment”.

Liam Parker, Assistant Chief Librarian, Belfast Education and Library Board

BACK IN 1973 when I told someone that I was applying for a job with the Library Service in Armagh I was told that as a Catholic I was wasting my time. Such was the perception in those days. Undoubtedly it is a view which still persists in certain quarters, but it is much less widespread today than it was then. This, I would argue, has been one of the great successes of the Board system in the education and library field and one which, to a large degree, has been unsung, the fact that a large element of sectarianism has been effectively removed from the equation regarding the provision of education and library services across the whole of Northern Ireland. This has been no small achievement given the fact that we live and work in a divided community. Any pretence that this was not so or that the differences between the two communities here were becoming less significant was surely blown away in the events surrounding the Drumcree protests during the summer. The five Education and Library Boards have had to establish themselves and develop as effective service providers in a community which in many ways has been at war with itself over the years since their creation. That the Boards have succeeded so well is all the more commendable, given the major difficulties which they have had to face over the past two decades or so. As we move inexorably towards 1997 and the seemingly inevitable break-up of the five-board system it is important that the impressive track record of the combined boards is not forgotten.

So why change? As far as the Library Service is concerned there is no reason whatsoever for any significant change in the present administrative system. The changes which have been proposed are driven, so we are told, by the significant changes which have taken place in the education sector over the past few years, the transfer of Board functions to schools and colleges, the creation of the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment and so on. In the Minister's view such changes have made the present administrative system 'over elaborate', in other words, too costly. This, on the surface at least, would appear to be a reasonable viewpoint. Any administrative system must be kept continually under review in order to ensure that it is kept broadly in line with the set of circumstances in which it operates and which may be constantly changing. In relation to educational administration circumstances have undoubtedly changed, and

as the Boards seemingly prepare to change shape as a result of these changes, we in the library service are being dragged in their wake. There is no argument against the view that economic factors must play a part in determining the shape and scale of any administrative system, but other factors, such as community make-up and needs, must also be weighed in the balance. But in the Minister's attempts to effect a reduction in the number of Boards there appears to be little doubt that economics is the driving force, even though the figure that has been suggested by the Minister as the likely saving resulting from the proposed changes is little short of derisory, some £2 million per annum. Aside from the economic arguments, however, the attempts to alter the present Board structures are beginning to assume something of an element of farce. Somewhere in the Minister's list of advisors there is a Sir Humphrey, perhaps? First of all the South Eastern Board is to be abolished (or merged depending on your point of view). When this is prevented, seemingly by an effective local campaign against it, the decision is simply to move west of the Bann and to demolish the Western Board! What are the economists telling us? That the factors which suggested that the South Eastern Board should go are the same as those which now dictate the closure of the Western Board? In economic terms, I suppose, the end result is the same, viz a reduction in the number of administrative units, but it completely ignores the questions of effectiveness and efficiency. Since 1973 each Board has developed as a service provider with a widespread network of roots going deep into the heart of the areas in which they are based. Over the past twenty three years the development of this root system has been evolving out of countless meetings and discussions, as well as a plethora of formal and informal contacts in the local community, all of which are essential in the establishment of an efficient local network by means of which services are provided which truly meet the needs of local communities. The present proposals to reduce the number of Boards simply ignores all of this and puts a broad economic spade through this delicate root system. Undoubtedly damage will be done as a result. Whether the damage is significant or permanent remains to be seen. I rather fear that it may be both.

In arbitrarily demolishing service frameworks in this way you are, in fact, attacking the fabric of a democratic society. The reduction in the number of Education and Library Boards, the diminution in the role of the newly constituted Boards, the establishment of centralised procedures and the creation of agencies – all of these things represent a weakening of far too many links in the democratic chain. Furthermore, if these changes can be implemented so readily in the Education sector, the likelihood, in my view, is that the exercise will be repeated elsewhere, in the Health Boards for example. The argument against these changes should not be based, therefore, on simply trying to hold on to existing, and, in the Government's view, 'out-moded' structures, but on the fundamental issue of defending democratic structures. On the one hand, the Government is reducing the number of Boards and at the same time removing a range of important functions from the control of the Boards, while on the other hand it is allowing an additional number of local representatives to sit on the Boards. In my view it is a pretty poor deal we are being offered, representing as it does an overall reduction in democracy.

As far as the library service is concerned the quality of service being provided today far exceeds that which was on offer in the early seventies. Computerisation of the various stock control systems has been of immense benefit, both to library staff and customers. There have been major improvements in the fields of local history studies, services for children, services for the elderly and the housebound, in the provision of local government information, but most notably in the development of an impressive network of first-class local branch libraries across the whole of Northern Ireland. And yet, if I was asked to use one word to sum up the mood of most library staff in Northern Ireland at the present time it would have to be 'pessimistic'. There is a malaise throughout the service which is only in part due to under-funding. Shortage of money will always be a problem, and this will remain the case even with a reduced number of Boards. There is very little likelihood, in my view, of additional money being made available at the service end of the system as a result of any changes which come about in Mr Ancram's scheme of things.

Those of us who live in this part of the island are frequently accused of being pre-occupied with the colour of the flags we acknowledge. Those of us who work for the Boards perhaps will say that the 'flags' of which we have been most conscious in recent years are those of the three 'E's, the terrible triplicates of effectiveness, efficiency and economy. These have been fluttering over our heads now, seemingly for an eternity, and of the three there is little doubt that it is the latter which has achieved a significant pre-eminence in the administrative ethos of this present government. This particular flag is waved at us each day of our working lives and while we, as administrators and service providers, do owe it a certain allegiance, it must be stressed over and over again that most of us do not regard it as the *raison d'être* of our choice of a career in the public sector. At heart we are service providers, our primary aim being to ensure that the public get what they want or need as quickly and as efficiently as possible. This, in my experience, is what motivates most library staff, and long may it continue to be so.

What the public library service needs more than anything else at the present time is not another administrative restructuring. Much more urgently it requires the hoisting of a flag which will proudly proclaim the value of public service, which will proclaim the fact that the service still believes in meeting the library needs of all our local communities, that it believes in prioritising resources in order to meet the special needs of the disadvantaged sections of these communities, the unemployed, the single-parents, the ill, the physically handicapped, the aged, the mentally ill and so on. Back in 1979 the Department of Education and Science (for England and Wales) published *The Libraries' Choice*, a significant report aimed at focusing the Public Library's response to those suffering from deprivation in our society. This was before the selfish, grab-all eighties, when we concerned ourselves with such matters. The report noted:

'During times of economic hardship, the public library service becomes more important, not less, to the community as a whole, and especially to those who, without some help, are effectively barred from its service.'

We should recognise the fact that this conclusion is as relevant to the library service

today as it was in the seventies. Despite the assurances of the economic spin-doctors there are a great many people in the community who have yet to experience the effect of the 'feel-good factor'. In modern British society there are greater social and economic divisions than there have been for generations. Come what may in terms of administrative reorganisation, the library service must somehow rediscover something of the crusading spirit of the Victorians. We must recommence the fight to maintain libraries as an integral part of what remains of the essential public services. This is clearly not what the government intends. All of the recent soundings from that quarter indicate that libraries are being pushed, slowly but firmly, in the direction of leisure ie peripheral services and while attempting to meet the recreational needs of our customers will always remain an important part of our function it should never be regarded as our sole function. Over the past number of years libraries have undoubtedly lost ground in relation to their standing in society. To a large degree this has been caused by our own loss of faith in the lasting value of our role as service providers. I have little confidence that the proposed administrative changes will in any way act as a catalyst for reversing this process, but they may, in an indirect way, by reminding people of what has been lost as a result of the latest restructuring, bring about a revitalisation of spirit in the service, a spirit rooted firmly in hope for the future.

Gerry Burns, Divisional Librarian, Craigavon, Southern Education and Library Board

IN A RECENT ARTICLE Ian Watson has this to say about the slogan – “Libraries. The Future. Literally” with which the Library Association will launch next year’s National Libraries Week.

"Are libraries the future? Does the 'literal' metaphor not reinforce the bookish perception which bedevils librarians? In the information society, does the librarian play a lead role or merely a supporting bit part? The slogan is not encouraging and does many librarians a disservice".¹

Unfortunately, I do not know what Mr Watson does for a living or what sort of a library he works in. (Why am I so sure that it won't turn out to be a public library?) The only information that I have on him is that he “writes in a personal capacity” and that he does not really know what “literally” means. The question which most interests me, however, is not whether the use of the term “literally” in the Library Association’s slogan does indeed “reinforce the bookish perception” of librarians but why Mr Watson is so angry about it, and why he thinks such a thought “bedevils” librarians. This is, I think, an important question when we come to look at the future development of the public library service in Northern Ireland because how the profession perceives itself, the roles and functions it expects to carry out, will determine, to a large extent, the direction any change will take and ultimately the success of the development itself.

Mr Watson suffers from what has now become a general malaise within the profession, something which took root a number of years ago when doubts were first expressed as to

whether librarianship was a profession at all and now concerns itself primarily with caustic denial of everything that looks or sounds like a library or a book. In this scenario librarians turn red and embarrassed when asked what they do and pretend they are involved with something worthwhile in the information world (as previously men used to be “something big in the City”).

It is a trend which has seen library schools become adjuncts of Information Management faculties which no longer teach anything as simple and straightforward as librarianship, libraries themselves disappear and become much more interesting information resource centres, the word information become almost a meaningless concept and public librarians traduced as some sort of bibliographic social workers (or managers) who would no more read the books they stock their shelves with than farmers eat the beef they kindly supply to our supermarkets. Why should this be so? While the popularity of the public library service with those who use it remains high despite years of neglect and underfunding, librarians themselves no longer seem sure exactly what sort of service they wish to preside over, now that books and an involvement with them is no longer considered to be a sufficiently grown-up occupation in this computer-assisted information age.

No doubt, to serve this insecurity precious funds will soon be wasted in pursuit of public access to the Internet as previously it was wasted on records and videos and computer games, all of which gained a momentary popularity but which could only ever serve as distractions from what should be the continuing focus of the public library service, the promotion of literacy and the preservation of quality within the written record. Or, as we are not allowed to stand still even here, the promotion of what Toni Carbo Bearman now calls mediacy (denoting “the ability to find and use information in multimedia formats, and to connote the sense of immediacy for instantaneous transmission and receipt of information in all formats!” – my exclamation mark).²

There are probably many reasons for this loss in confidence on the part of public librarians. In part it is due to the near impossibility of the tasks facing them of managing decreasing resources and continuing to provide a comprehensive service which satisfies both educational and recreational requirements for information access. In part it is due to the natural nervousness of a profession which has seen its basic skills and knowledge expropriated by other “information specialists” and itself side-lined as belonging to another age now past with nothing left to offer. In Northern Ireland, though, this natural diffidence is compounded by the public library service’s forced association with the education service in a series of boards which are Education and Library Boards in name only and in which the library service is very much of minor concern. While the library service may have gained enormously from the introduction of the Board system and the subsequent reduction in the number of library authorities, the price was high indeed. It consolidated those feelings of inadequacy, of somehow not being important enough, mentioned above. It subordinated the objectives and purpose of the library service to the concerns of education and frustrated any further hope of developing a properly co-ordinated regional library service (which now must be considered essential if the public library service is to

have any future outside Belfast). The present unwelcome upheaval – itself a product of the tension which exists between the boards and their relationship with the Department of Education – in which the library service is being re-organised as a consequence of the re-organisation of educational administration and for reasons which have nothing to do with developing a better structure for the public library service, is perhaps the best illustration of the point I am trying to make. So far, too much of the debate surrounding the Department's proposals has been centred on preserving the link with education at all costs and not enough time has been spent on analysing the supposed benefits of the link and looking at other options, however daunting they may appear in the short-term.

The major strength of the public library service is the non-prescriptive nature of the services they offer (though perhaps someone should take a look at the number of books that can be borrowed at any one time – especially by children and the unchanging pattern of opening hours). Attendance is not compulsory. You can join as a child and then not come back for another fifty years without having to feel guilty or get a doctor's certificate to explain away the years of absence. It doesn't matter how old you are, how literate you might be or how much money you have. No-one asks you why you've come or what you think you might do once you've arrived. It doesn't cost you anything (or at least any more than you've already contributed as tax or rates). You don't even have to pass an entrance exam to get in or have one of those new, de-valued GCSEs. That is why public libraries are ideally placed to promote literacy (sorry, old habits die hard – mediacy) within society, to assert the importance of reading as a way of understanding the world and to promote the concept of knowledge as being something more than the acquisition of mere facts, especially for those still at school and those whose formal education failed to teach them anything for one reason or another and who do not have the necessary finances to fund their own second chance.

At the risk of sounding too bookish, I make no apology for asserting that the public library service will only be able to do this if it maintains a strong bias towards the printed word in its collections (and, within those collections, a strong bias towards fiction). The relationship between text and meaning cannot be learned from a computer screen, where text is too compressed and where the next hypertext link beckons you forward, siren-like, ever deeper into the heart of the machine, entrapping you in a series of relationships so casual that by the time you've worked out where you are you've already forgotten the question that started you off on your search for the elusive grail. Nor should the search for relevant information be considered an end in itself, with the emphasis placed solely on quantity, the more "hits" the better. This is where quality is important, the ability to determine which of those many "hits" are the ones which are crucial to understanding, the ones which should be pursued while the others are abandoned. Again I make no apology for asserting that it is the librarian's role to organise collections so that only the best is preserved for future generations.

In a similar way, public libraries are also uniquely placed to contribute to the preservation of that sense of ourselves, our history, our culture, our sense of myth, which is so important in determining our relationship with society and the rest of the world. Particularly in Northern Ireland, where neutral ground is so hard to find and where con-

nectedness is often denied, the role of the public library has become crucial. Within a regional context individual public libraries belong to the community they serve. They are where the purely local meets the national and then the international, where the present forges the future out of an understanding of the past, with the library serving as the bridge in a varied and ever changing landscape.

Of course none of this is new. It is what the public library service has always done and done well. But then why does it have to be new? The real challenge is, rather than embracing novelty for its own sake, to see how best we can preserve and protect those central, if traditional, concerns of the service, those things which a library has always done for the very good reason that it does them better than anyone else. The public library service needs to adapt to cope with populations that are ageing, with job markets which are now more flexible and in which part-time work and rapid career change, will, supposedly, become a common occurrence, where education will become a life-long process in which the school and college years will only form a very small part and with a situation where the disparity between town and country will increasingly disappear. It is against this model of change that the structure of the public library service should be considered, where it should best be placed organisationally to meet the challenges ahead. With the current educational structure likely to become more, rather than less, marginalised, as it too attempts to come to terms with change and as the impetus for educational reform continues and the distinctions between those institutions offering educational services are gradually eroded, then, surely, it is time to at least consider the possibility of severing the link with education and allow it to bloom elsewhere and stand as a service in its own right. The Library Association is correct for once. Libraries are the future but only if librarians with a bold new vision decide that it should be so – literally.

Kirby Porter, Principal Librarian with the Northern Ireland Civil Service

REORGANISATION OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION will impact strongly on public library provision in Northern Ireland, yet it has been devised without regard to public libraries. We can debate the relative merits of five board and three board structures as far as libraries are concerned, but such a debate is meaningless when decisions on services are taken for reasons at which we can only guess. Irrespective, however, of what number we finally end up with, it does at least stimulate us to consider where we are, how far we have come and where we want to go.

In library circles, some have felt that public libraries have not been best served by the link with education, that libraries always lose out to the emphasis placed by the Department of Education and the Boards themselves on the classroom. But over the last twenty years there has been much achievement, and progress has been made towards providing a solid basis on which to build services for the twenty-first century. Before the inception of the Boards, library provision in the province was a patchwork, poorly resourced in many places, and a generation behind developments across the water. In

much of the province there were few professionally qualified staff, most library premises were inadequate, some large centres had no reference library, schools library services were not uniformly available, housebound services were largely unknown and the development of local history collections often depended on the personal enthusiasm of individual librarians. Clearly many communities benefited from the change from local council control to Board control. The Boards kick-started the library service on a province-wide basis – professional librarians were recruited in unprecedented numbers, new libraries built, mobile fleets increased, a statutory Schools Library Service developed, reference collections built up and special services targeted to the housebound and to those in hospitals and prisons. We take for granted the services we now have. We complain, and rightly so, about the effect of cuts, of always taking second place to education, but we forget how far we have come, and what the Board structure has achieved.

In the seventies, the Boards laid the foundations for a high quality library service. The eighties, in retrospect, when levels of funding sharply declined, was a decade in limbo, waiting for things to happen, waiting for someone else to provide money to make them happen. In the nineties, Boards have had the self confidence to start making things happen, to take advantage of new opportunities at local level and to form local alliances. The separate functional structures of local government in Northern Ireland, as opposed to unitary authorities elsewhere, have made it difficult for local services to be developed strategically, yet the importance of strategic planning at local level has grown as funding bodies have directed more and more money to local programmes. Boards have needed to be proactive in local council areas to secure a share of this funding – the Londonderry Initiative, for example, has provided capital funding for two libraries, while a Private Finance Initiative involving the Western Education and Library Board and Derry City Council will provide a replacement branch library this year. With the development of the Regional Training Unit, Boards have also invested time and money in staff development with new opportunities at regional and at local level for staff training. There has been a substantial payoff for this in the form of local projects, initiated by staff who have acquired new skills and the confidence to use them. Library staff have had much greater opportunities in the last few years to work with other Board staff, to demonstrate their professionalism and to add to the credibility of the Library service as a core area of their Board's responsibilities.

New opportunities are emerging all the time. Most of these opportunities are specific to local areas and to local communities, because this is increasingly how funding, particularly capital funding, is targeted. To take full advantage of them Boards require local partners, since statutory bodies are not always eligible for some funding programmes. These opportunities can be translated into new buildings, new technology, literacy projects, literature development programmes, IT programmes, projects with children, with the elderly, with those with special needs. Occasionally they can even be translated into new stock. They involve co-operation with local councils, community groups, local schools, other statutory providers and a host of new special interest groups. Lottery provision is revolutionising the funding of local arts provision and community development.

European funding is now coming on-stream as well. For those communities seeking to improve their local services, the Boards are credible and desirable partners. Over the last couple of years Boards have been positioning themselves to move forward with local initiatives, and a new ethos of seeking and exploiting opportunity has developed. Given the Library's local branch networks, and its remit to provide a service for all ages and groups, the Library Service is a natural player in many of these new developments. Structures and systems are evolving to empower staff, to encourage them to be proactive and to plan and deliver local services to meet local needs and to exploit local opportunities.

The Board structure, as we know it, is not the only way in which effective services can be delivered. There are always other ways of doing things. New structures, given time, can develop innovative services. But it will take time. Instead of capitalising on what is in place, and consolidating, we will enter a period of limbo and stagnation. Time and energy will go into building new organisations, as existing teams are broken up and systems dismantled. We will all have to start again, and, in the process, we will inevitably take our eye off the ball. It will take the new boards several years to get themselves to the point where the existing Boards are now. And how long will they have before the next reorganisation comes along? We can have little confidence that the three board model will have as long a life-span as the five boards. Indeed, unless we resign ourselves to another quarter century of political stagnation, there will be another radical restructuring as new political institutions develop. We find ourselves in the middle of a game of Snakes and Ladders – having hauled ourselves slowly towards the top, up a series of ladders, encountering the odd grass snake along the way, the Government throws a three instead of a five, and we go slithering down the longest snake on the board, back to the start.

It is arguable whether three boards will provide better support for education. No-one at all has claimed that it will provide a better Library Service. Libraries are local services, based in local communities. The original thrust of the Boards, as they sought in the seventies to establish their own identities, was to centralise and to establish broadly similar patterns of service. The natural instinct of new Boards is likely to be the same, as they too seek to establish themselves, and, as a consequence, the emphasis once again will be on providing a uniform service to quite disparate communities. Instead of re-engaging with local communities, regionalisation and centralisation will lead to disengagement. At a time when local communities are reasserting themselves and everywhere pressing more forcefully for improved local services, and when, increasingly, new local groups are setting up to provide services for themselves, without reference to statutory providers (and getting money to do this), any loss of a local sense of ownership will handicap library development.

The *UNESCO Public Library Manifesto* describes the public library as the local gateway to knowledge, the local centre for information, the responsibility of both local and national governments. The balance between the need for a national network, with consistent standards nationwide and the need for services which are locally relevant and accountable is a delicate one. In America and in Europe libraries have remained under the control of local communities. In Scotland, England and Wales, the recent reorganisation has established

smaller authorities. Improved communication technologies, nationally agreed standards, and cooperative networks mean that smaller organisations can take advantage of economies of scale and have common services while retaining a local identity which commands local support. But in Northern Ireland we are being drawn inexorably down the road to centrally administered authorities, which will be less accessible, disengaged from what is happening at local level, and less sensitive to local issues and concerns. Who will fight to save a three board structure, when its turn comes? Who will care enough about a single library authority to defend libraries? In the long term, the future of libraries may well lie with unitary local authorities, as in Britain and Ireland, where they can be integrated with other local services, included in local strategic planning, and so make a real contribution to the social, cultural and economic life of the community. In the meantime, the existing Boards are a useful compromise, one acceptable to local people. It is time enough to change when we have new political structures which promised stability for more than one generation.

Anne Peoples, Northwest Divisional Librarian Western Education and Library Board

SPEAK ABOUT THE STATE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES at the moment to most librarians in Northern Ireland and talk turns inevitably to the *Review of Educational Administration* and the effects the latest variant proffered by the Government will have on the future of staff and services in the Boards. The thought suggests itself, however, that, had these proposals not come along, a welcome opportunity to address such urgent issues as the future of public libraries, their evolving ethos, their funding, the services they should provide would have been lost. These larger issues of mission and ethos have long needed to be addressed. Only when agreement has been reached on them can the equally pressing but, surely, subsidiary matters of administration and service delivery be settled.

After twenty three years did anyone really think that the structures and organisation of our Education and Library Boards would remain the same, that the partnership would survive, that the family of services would grow into well-rounded, self-perpetuating maturity? Was it too optimistic in these days of unfettered partnerships, short-term relationships and tempting offers of instant gratification to think that the Boards would reach their silver anniversary unscathed? If there had been a better offer, or a more attractive partner perhaps the break-up would have been just as hard, if more readily understood. In the end, unsurprisingly, it has all come down to money, or so it appears, and a paltry sum of money at that.

Regrets? Recriminations? Should the Boards not have foreseen the inevitable, should they not have positioned themselves better? With some counselling could they not have brokered a more acceptable deal? Perhaps not, but, equally, there is little evidence of welcome for the results. The division of the family assets and the custody arrangements have pleased very few and, regrettably, we concede that the "decree absolute" is not far away.

No matter what is salvaged, the relationship between the Boards, the Department of Education, the various levels of education and the public library service is unlikely to be

quite the same as that which has existed to date. Trust has been lost and latent problems uncovered, jealousies aroused, positions taken and words spoken in haste.

Those who will be engaged in the early stages of mapping the future and creating a vision for public libraries must be encouraged to question past experience. They should insist on a favourable “pre-nuptial agreement”, one that, whilst preserving the autonomy of the public library service also secures a clearly defined and unambiguous recognition of the contribution libraries can and do make to education. Surely if we can all agree that public libraries continue to underpin literacy and hold open the gates to life-long learning for all citizens regardless of their personal circumstances, then our future can continue to be one of close co-operation with other education providers. So, who has to be persuaded and who will be the advocates?

The Boards have been forced into a defensive position from the outset of the Review. If there is still a possibility that this Review can be halted the danger exists that this would be used to simply stave off the inevitable for a few more years, in the hope that another more enlightened administration would adopt a more favourable approach, unlikely as this development appears to most observers. Could some begin to nurture the even more forlorn hope that if we keep very quiet, are very good, do not rock the boat, the horrible nightmare will go away and leave us alone? A third, more positive, possibility co-exists with these. Could the Boards seize the initiative, actively co-operate in planning the future, adopt a radical and visionary stance rather than allow themselves to be coerced into participating in a process not of their making?

Reviewing Educational Administration is the issue of the moment and will inevitably affect the future of the public library service but, as if this local difficulty were not enough, Matthew Evans, looks set on further “twisting” our professional tails when his Library Commission launches its vision for libraries, a vision which, it is widely believed, will give special prominence to the need for partnerships with business and the private sector. With views of the Commission in mind, it is, thus, important that we do not let the concerns of a local review obscure emergent national priorities and policies.

The last two years have seen public libraries, after a long period of being almost completely ignored, both here and across the United Kingdom, exposed to scrutiny through a couple of major surveys of public opinion. After complaining for so long about the neglect, the lack of interest in public libraries, suddenly a large dose of opinion has been administered! Of course, we have been critical of the findings but the welcome evidence of the public’s high regard for library staff has helped ameliorate the effects of the more pointedly critical comment. Unfortunately, librarians have a certain arrogance. We believe that no one can pose the questions and interpret the results as well as ourselves because no one else understands our ethos well enough! Well, if part of the problem is that no one understands us or, worse, no one really cares much about public libraries, are we partly to blame? *Turning over a New Leaf*, whether or not universally admired or whole heartedly accepted by those in public libraries in Northern Ireland, has nevertheless prompted a renewed consideration of public interest and needs.

Although we know a great deal about how many people borrow from public libraries, and have the figures to prove it, the people who could make a difference to our future seem unwilling to be impressed by any other measures or arguments demonstrating the worth and importance of public library services. The high regard for staff and services evidenced time and again in surveys and in anecdote is not reflected in improved resources or in the understanding of those who mould public opinion.

Who really cares? I believe we have to accept that our self-effacing behaviour, our cherished service mentality, our tendency to inflexibility, our nostalgia for a cosy, golden age (if such ever existed) may now work against us in the current, fiercely competitive market place. There is nothing wrong with the service ethos. Indeed it is part of the public expectation. There is nothing wrong in looking with pride at the range of services and resources offered at very little cost compared to other public services but not much point if not enough people are aware of what is available. We acquiesce quietly, albeit reluctantly, in projecting a soft public image, aware that libraries are judged to be not as vital as health services or mainstream education services. We continue to eke out our relatively meagre resources providing a cheap and, in the main, very efficient public service and few seem to understand how it may be in jeopardy, how it cannot be sustained unless more people in 'high places' realize the true value, as well as the fragile foundations of such a universal, free public service.

There is a feeling that somewhere along the way we, librarians in the public service, have been seduced from our proper role. We have prostituted our professional ideals and sacrificed our integrity on the altar of the business ethic. I wonder what the answers would be to question such as; "What is a professional Librarian?" and "What is so special about the public library service?" The rapid development of information and other technologies, the improved spending power of many individuals, the competing influences for leisure time, the growth of independent learning all of these have affected the response of staff and public to those questions. Those using libraries care less about the expertise behind the supply of information and materials than they do about availability and speed of supply. Undoubtedly, they should be made more aware of what is involved, of the costs of materials, expert staff, services and buildings. This, not so that they can be charged an economic rate but that they may more fully appreciate the services many of them take for granted. Just as important is the need to persuade funders, in our case, the Education and Library Boards of the integral role public libraries play in the development of the educational, social and cultural well-being of the people.

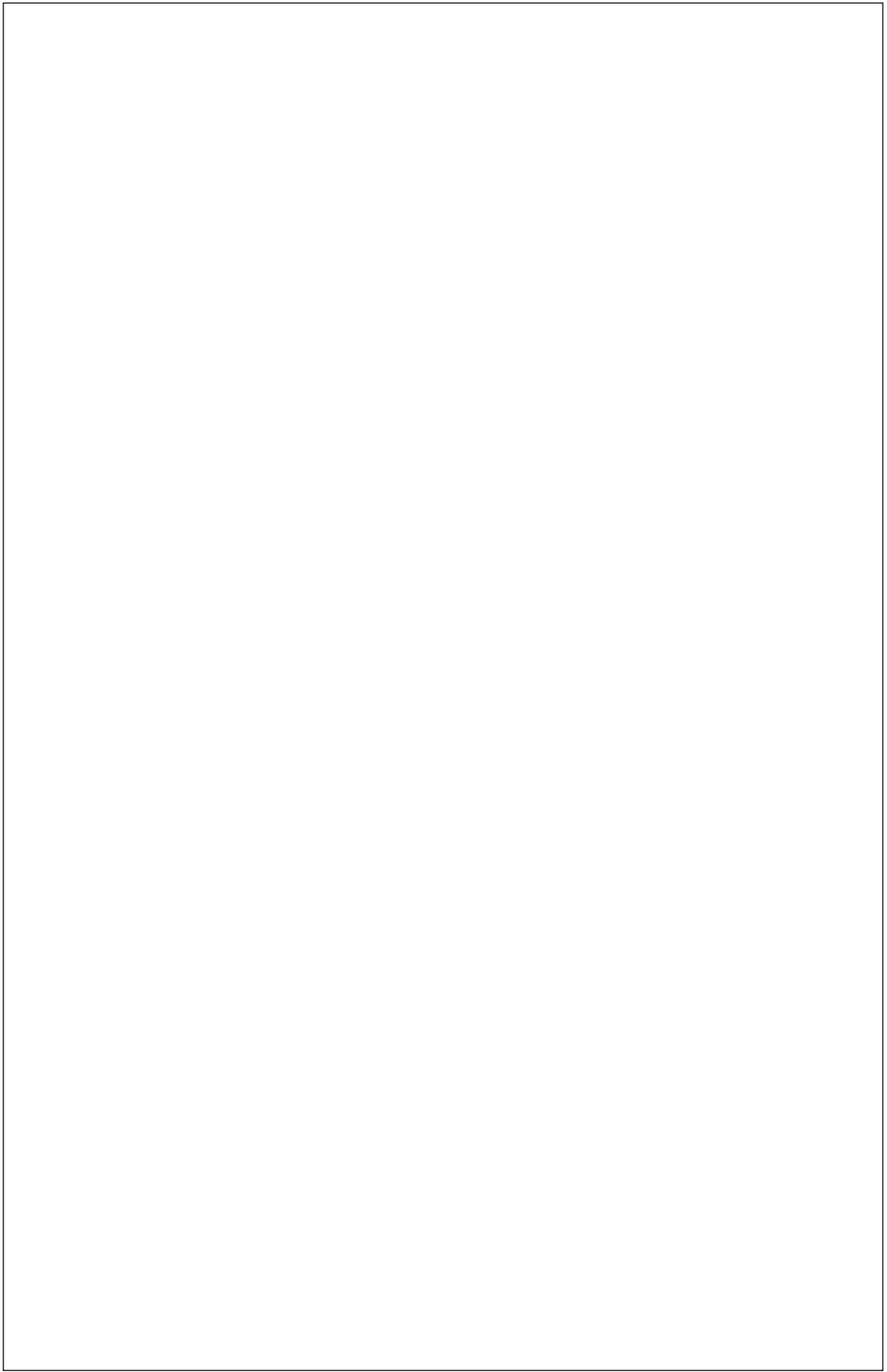
Many working in public libraries feel undervalued. At times they are held in derision by those ill-informed about modern library services. They feel they are the poor relation when it comes to funding and recognise they lag behind the arts and even museums when it comes to a positive public profile. The situation is not helped by the fact that among those to whom we look for advocacy – government officials, educationalists, business leaders – there are many, perhaps even a majority, who do not themselves use a public library. This fact renders more urgent the question of where libraries today can hope to find effective advocates.

Despite the present air of uncertainty and concern, I doubt if any of us fears the total and imminent demise of the public library service. We must, however, be prepared to see it change and seize the opportunity to drive that change rather than let it be driven by forces, at least potentially, unsympathetic to our goals. Too many people will continue to depend on the public library service, especially as the ability of other education providers to meet the continuing needs of those engaged in lifetime learning is progressively weakened. The future will necessitate a very flexible response from the service, more investment in technology, changes in opening hours, a more overt marketing and promotion policy. Above all, more pressure must be brought to bear on funders and partners to recognise the potential and current contribution made by public libraries to the education and welfare of people in Northern Ireland.

Beth Porter, Assistant Chief Librarian South Eastern Education and Library Board

References

- 1 Ian Watson, Tech Heads 4 – Dewey 3 (after penalties), *Managing Information*: July/August 1996 p11
- 2 Toni Carbo Bearman, Information transforming society: challenges for the year 2000 in *Information services and use*. London: Aslib, 1992



INFORMATION MATTERS

News and Notes

Please forward contributions to:

- Fionnuala Hanrahan, Dublin Corporation Public Library Service, Cumberland House, Fenian St., Dublin, 2. Eire. Fax : +353 1 676 1628. E-mail : fmhan@iol.ie
- Mary Kintner, South Eastern Education & Library Board, Windmill Hill, Ballynahinch, Co. Down, Northern Ireland, BT24 8DH. Fax : +8 01238 565072.

National policy on libraries and the information society

.....

The Eurofocus on Libraries Committee has distributed a document *Libraries and the information society: towards the formulation of a national policy for the Republic of Ireland*, a consultative document produced by Dr. Michael Casey, seeking a response from all interested parties regarding a proposed model for a national policy on libraries. Any such policy, it is suggested, should form an element of an information strategy to be linked to national government policies and aim to meet national information requirements for sustained development. Further information from Eurofocus Committee Secretary, Annette Kelly, 53/54 Upper Mount St., Dublin 2, Republic of Ireland.
Tel: +353 1 676 1963.
Fax: +353 1 676 1167.
E-mail : annkelly@libl.tcd.ie

The Library Association of Ireland (LAI) has made a submission on the document. Copies of the response are available from the Hon. Secretary, Brendan Teeling, LAI, 53/54 Upper Mount St., Dublin, 2. Republic of Ireland.
Fax : +353 1 676 1628.

Education Administration in Northern Ireland

.....

In a six- page statement issued on the 25 June 1996, the Northern Ireland Minister of Education, Michael Ancram, outlined his final proposals for educational administration in Northern Ireland. These proposals replace the present five Boards with three new authorities – the Eastern, Southern and Northern Education and Library Boards. The new Eastern Education and Library Board will cover Belfast, Castlereagh, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus, Lisburn, North Down, Ards and Down. The new Southern Education and Library Board will cover Armagh, Craigavon, Banbridge, Newry & Mourne, Dungannon, Cookstown, Omagh and Fermanagh. The new Northern Education and Library Board will cover Derry, Strabane, Limavady, Magherafelt, Coleraine, Ballymoney, Moyle, Ballymena, Antrim and Larne. Draft legislation spelling out the new arrangements is expected to be published in October 1996.

The Library Association Northern Ireland Branch called an emergency meeting on the 1 July 1996 to consider a response to the Minister's proposals. A number of major areas of concern were highlighted : the quality of the

library service for the public and education sectors; the continued statutory provision of a public library service and a schools library service within the Boards; the need for investment in infrastructure and information technology to ensure equality of provision and access and an emphasis on libraries as an integral part of the education process. The response called for the inclusion of informed professional advice in the implementation of the new administrative framework.

Copies of the response available from Elga Logue, Hon. Secretary LANI, Central Library, 35 Foyle Street Derry BT48 6AL
 Tel: 01 504 266888 Ext 261
 or from Library Association Headquarters
 Tel: 0171 636 7543.
 Fax: 0171 436 7218.
 E-mail: info@la-hq.org.uk.
 WWW: <http://www.fdggroup.co.uk/la.htm>

The Western Education and Library Board, targeted for dissolution in the new proposals for educational administration, is resisting the plans for restructuring and adopting a policy of non-co-operation. A "Save the West" Campaign has been spearheaded by the public service union NIPSA and is backed by the five district councils in the board's area as well as chambers of trade, community and church leaders.

(Source *Belfast Telegraph* August 6 1996)

LAI submission to Information Society Steering Committee

Copies of the Library Association of Ireland's submission to the Information Society Steering Committee, *Universal access to knowledge and works of the imagination*, are available from the Hon. Secretary, Brendan Teeling, LAI, 53/54 Upper Mount St., Dublin 2, Republic of Ireland.
 Fax: +353 1 676 1628.

Arts Sponsorship

The Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts (ABSA) Northern Ireland has launched its new Pairing Scheme which aims to double the business benefits of arts sponsorship by matching it with an award of Government money pound for pound. The scheme replaces the Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme (BSIS) and will be administered for the Government by ABSA. Since 1987 the Government's incentive scheme has attracted almost £4 million in new money for the arts in Northern Ireland, with awards of £1.3 million generating £2.6 million in sponsorship from the business community.

(Source *Ulster Business* May 1996)

National arts sponsorship survey

According to the recent COTHU survey, business spending on arts sponsorship in 1995 was IR £7.36 million, an increase of 40.8% on 1993 figures. In 1995 banks/building societies and food/beverages provided nearly 40% of that provision. No area of the arts in particular is dominating the receipts. Music at 14.5% of the total share is first, followed by Heritage at 11.5%. Museums, collections and archives got 6.3% and literature, poetry and publishing received 3%. 11% of funding went to countrywide projects. Otherwise regionally the greater Dublin area received 57% of expenditure, while the Midlands at the other end of the scale received only 2.1%.

Copies of the full report are available from COTHU, 46 Lower Mount St., Dublin 2, Republic of Ireland,
 Tel: +353 1 676 6966.
 Fax: +353 1 676 6997.

Commission on the Newspaper Industry

The Commission submitted its report to the Minister for Enterprise & Employment in June.

Major recommendations addressed issues of ownership, libel and costs, including the provision of mechanisms to improve labour relations, the impact of technology and training requirements, the reduction of VAT to zero, amendments to existing legislation and the introduction of an ombudsman.

National public library policy promised

At a meeting with a delegation from the Library Association of Ireland on 16th May, the Minister for the Environment, Brendan Howlin, acknowledged the need for a national public library policy to inform the current debate on more general national information policy. The LAI undertook to prepare a document and discuss it with department officials. Other issues discussed, in line with motions at the March AGM, included the provision of free, open and accessible public libraries, and the delivery of investment to progress development.

Networking public libraries

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna has commissioned a report on networking public libraries, from TelTec Ireland Ltd. Further information from Alun Bevan, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, 53/54 Upper Mount St., Dublin 2, Republic of Ireland.
Tel: +353 1 676 1963.
Fax: +353 1 676 1167.

SEELB

A pilot scheme is underway in three libraries of the South Eastern Education and Library Board to see how children and young people use CD ROM technology in the public library for homework and leisure reading. Children and their parents will be able to book half hour sessions on the computer to use multimedia encyclopaedias, dictionaries, and language packs and 'read' multimedia living books in dual language versions. Colour printouts of information can be taken away to use at home or in school. Ballynahinch, Donaghadee and Laurelhill Community libraries are the first public libraries in Northern Ireland to provide access to CD ROM for children. The pilot scheme will run until December 1996.

For further information contact:
Pamela Cooper, Ballynahinch Library, Main Street, Ballynahinch BT24 8DN
Tel: 01238 566442.
Norma Miller, Donaghadee Library, 5 Killaughey Road, Donaghadee BT21 0BL
Tel: 01247 882507.
Michael Bell, Laurelhill Community Library, Laurelhill Road, Lisburn BT28 2UH
Tel: 01846 664596.

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna on the WWW

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna's home page on the World Wide Web can be accessed at: <http://dallas.ucd.ie/~library>. Information is available on the services of an Chomhairle Leabharlanna, including current serials received, recent acquisitions and the latest issue of *Irish Library News*.

Belfast Telegraph

The *Belfast Telegraph* went online on the Internet in November 1995. Users who click onto the Belfast Telegraph home page on the Web can access the main news and business stories of the day as well as the Viewpoint editorial column.

Visit the web site at

<http://www.globalgateway.com/beltel/>

E-mail: editor@bfasttel.eunet.co.uk

(Source *Belfast Business Telegraph*
May 28 1996)

Systems – who’s selecting what?

BLCMP is supplying the TALIS library automation system to Clare County Council for its public library service.

Limerick RTC has selected the Classic Dynix system and Limerick County Council is introducing Dynix Horizon.

*Dewey for Windows
(DDC21 on CD ROM)*

A Microsoft Windows based compact disc version of DDC21 is available from Lendac Data Systems, Dublin. It has an easy to use windows format, expanded search and display options, ability to display multiple DDC records from the schedules, tables, index and manuals on one screen and the ability to share a single CD ROM among multiple users on a LAN.

For further information contact Aine Rice, Lendac Data Systems Ltd, Unit 6, IDA Enterprise Centre, Pearse Street, Dublin 2.
Tel: +353 1 6776133

Fax: +353 1 6710135

The Dewey Home Page is accessed at
WWW: <http://www.oclc.org/fp/>

EPOD project – exam papers on disc

The Library, St. Patrick’s College Maynooth, is working on a project to make exam papers available on CD-ROM via the campus network. By October 1996, it should be possible to search, view and print or download to disk papers from 1995 onwards from any PC on the campus network. Where available, papers will be input to the EPOD database from disk. Otherwise, the paper copy text will be scanned in. A small-scale version of EPOD has been available since May. Contact Library Systems, St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Republic of Ireland.

Tel : +353 1 628 6008, ext. 3898 for further information.

Linen Hall Library

Belfast’s Linen Hall Library has received a Heritage Fund Lottery Grant to enlarge and improve its premises. The £255,000 grant will help the library to complete the first phase of an improvement project costing £319,000. The acquisition of a long term lease on two upper floors of neighbouring premises will increase space for users, collections, education programmes and also improve access for disabled readers. The second phase which involves fitting out the space, will be the subject of a second bid.

(Source *Library Association Record*
August 1996).

Multi-media art at the National Gallery of Ireland

The National Gallery of Ireland, which re-opened in mid- May, has a multi-media gallery in Room 7. Developed in association with

IBM, the facility introduces a database of 100 paintings which may be accessed, using touch-screen technology, either chronologically, by painter or painting's name, by theme, by country, and by location within the Gallery.

Plans for the Gallery extension, which is scheduled for completion in 1999, include a multi-media room for the accessing of works of art both by CD-ROM and on the Internet, and an up-graded library and resource centre for art historians and students.

The CAIN Project: An archive of information on the Northern Ireland 'Troubles'

The primary aim of the CAIN Project (Conflict Archive on the Internet) is to develop a multimedia database of resources relevant to teaching and research in conflict studies. The archive will contain information sources relevant to Northern Ireland, such as full text documents, statistical data, still and moving images, newspaper articles, bibliographical records held by institutions and databases of researchers currently active in the field. The archive aims to reduce pressure on library resources and improve access to source material. Partner institutions involved in CAIN include the University of Ulster, Queen's University of Belfast and the Linen Hall Library.

The project is being developed as part of the Electronics Libraries Programme (eLib). eLib is funded by the Higher Education Funding Councils for England, Scotland and Wales and the Department of Education Northern Ireland through the Follett Implementation Group for IT (FIGIT). The CAIN project has received funding for 2 years, 1996–1997.

For further information contact Fionnuala McKenna, CAIN Project, University of Ulster,

Jordanstown Co. Antrim.

Tel: 01232 366235.

WWW: <http://www.ulst.ac.uk/caain/index.htm>

(Source *Link* No. 68 April 1996)

CINNI (Community Information Network Northern Ireland)

CINNI is a non profit community business set up to create and maintain an electronic communications infrastructure for use by charities, the voluntary sector and community based organisations in Northern Ireland. It aims to access general and specialised local, national and worldwide information resources, promote access to government information and to provide an Internet service to four hundred organisations by 1998. For further information contact Daithi O'Flaherty, Community Information Network Northern Ireland, 16 Cardigan Drive, Belfast BT14 6LX.
Tel: 01232-749433
Fax: 01232- 601000
E-mail: info.cinni@nics.gov.uk

Information Workers Network

IWN is a forum for information workers in the voluntary and community sector. It brings together information workers from various backgrounds and aims to promote a more professional approach to information work, including the sharing of skills, knowledge and experience and to arrange more formal training opportunities for information workers. An Information Workers' Directory was published by IWN in April 1996 giving details of 35 information services resourced by voluntary and community groups and highlighting sources of information in statutory agencies. For further information about the IWN and

the Directory contact Nadia Downing,
 NICVA, 127 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 1SH.
 Tel: 01232 321224.
 Fax: 01232 438350.

*(The Information Workers' Directory:
 A Voluntary Sector Resource. Free.
 ISBN 0 903087 34 0)
 (Source Scope May 1996)*

Accommodation

Planning for the fourth and final phase of Trinity College's Book Repository at Santry, Co. Dublin is now underway. The existing accommodation houses 2m volumes and it is intended that the next phase will provide space for an additional 750,000 volumes. The plans also include provision for facilities for readers who may wish to consult collections or longer runs of periodicals over a period of time. Building work will begin early in 1997 with completion in time to allow re-allocation of material into the new phase in the summer vacation.

Trinity Library has also received approval to proceed with plans for an architectural competition for the design of a new building on the College Green campus. The elements for the projected building will include seating for 750 users, an additional 360,000 volumes on open access and a data infrastructure which can deliver information in the variety of media increasingly required by the academic community. It is anticipated that the building will operate as part of a single unit together with the existing services of the Berkeley and Lecky libraries.

Tipperary Joint Library Committee opened a new library for the town of Nenagh, the first

major development of library facilities in the town in over 100 years. Comprising 475 sq. metres, the library has a premium site, carries an opening stock of 25,000 volumes, and provides 49 hours public service per week. Cost IR£650,000 including equipment and opening stock. The architect is Peter Morrissey. Staff 5 (1 professional). Further information from the County Librarian, Martin Maher,
 Tel : +353 504 21555.
 E-mail : tipplibs@iol.ie

South Dublin County Council has accepted delivery of a new mobile library. It holds 2,500 items of stock, cost IR£90,000 and, based on a Mercedes chassis, was fitted out by Keillors of Dundee. Further information from County Librarian, Richard Lennon,
 Tel : +353 1 462 000, ext. 2615.

Regional Co-operation

Under the chairmanship of Limerick County Librarian, Damien Brady, chief librarians in the Mid-West Region are meeting informally every two months to discuss and advance issues of common interest. Activities to date include library visits, joint training as well as co-operative acquisitions projects. More information from the Group Secretary, Lindsey Mitchell, The Library, University of Limerick, Plessey Technology Park, Limerick.
 Tel : +8 61 333644.
 Fax : +8 61 338044.

Research

The University of Ulster has had a project approved under the Electronics Libraries Programme (eLib). Electronic Submission and Peer Review (eSPeRE) aims to develop a system

permitting electronic peer review of articles submitted to UK learned society publishers. The focus is on problems associated with non-textual material within scientific articles and monographs.

Contact Ms Dee Wood

Tel/Fax: 01275 870226.

E-mail: dwood@salixedu.demon.co.uk

(Source *Library Technology* Vol 1 (3)

June 1996)

Project LISTED: Open learning through libraries in Europe

.....

Dublin City Library and Kildare County Library are two of six European test sites for the project LISTED (Library Integrated System for Telematics-based Education), a major European telematics open learning project. The main aim of LISTED is to increase access to technology based open learning by making this available in public libraries. Specific objectives of the project include a review of the user needs of both librarians and library users, in particular people with disabilities, the elderly, ethnic minorities, professional, research and specialist users. Total funding is over £800,000, about 50% of which is being provided by the EC from the Telematics for Libraries budget. A major outcome of the programme will be the development of interactive software designed to enable individuals to search out and use computer based training materials to match their own needs.

(Source *Open Learning Today*

May/June 1996)

Public Libraries User Surveys' Standard

.....

The CPLS (Committee for Public Library

Statistics) and IPF (Institute of Public Finance) have developed a comprehensive research system to an agreed national standard that Library Authorities can adopt in order to measure user satisfaction with public libraries. It includes a manual on how to launch a survey campaign.

Contact: Jonathan Gordon,

IPF Ltd, Suffolk House, College Road,

Croydon CRO 1PF

Tel: 0181 667 1144

Fax: 0181 681 6741

(Source *STV News* no.17 summer 1996)

Aristeoin European Literature Prizes

.....

John Montague's *Collected poems* and Eoin McNamee's *Resurrection Man* have been nominated by the Republic of Ireland for the Aristeoin European Literature Award. For the Translation Prize Gerailt Mac Eoin's translation of Padraic Ó Conaire's *Deoraiocht* and Maureen Charlton's version of *La Fontaine's Fables* have been nominated. The United Kingdom has forwarded Northern Ireland poet Michael Longley's *The Ghost Orchid*. Results are due in the autumn.

Bisto Book of the Year Awards 1996

.....

Out of a total of 92 titles submitted, the shortlist and winners (highlighted with a *) of the Bisto Book of the Year Awards are :

Mary Beckett, *Hannah or pink balloons*.

Dublin. Marino, 1995 ISBN : 186023 0326

(Merit Award)

Marita Conlon-McKenna, *Safe Harbour*.

Dublin. O'Brien, 1995 ISBN : 086278 4220

Benedict Kiely, *The trout in the turnhole*.

Dublin. Wolfhound, 1995 ISBN : 086327 451X

Ré Ó Laighleis, *Sceoin sa bhoireann*.

Gaillimh. Cló Iar-chonnachta, 1995
 ISBN : 187470 0133 (Merit Award)

**The Christmas miracle of Jonathan Toomey*
 (illustrated by P.J. Lynch). Dublin. Poolbeg,
 1995 ISBN : 185371 5352 (Overall Winner)

Paul Muldoon, *The last thesaurus*. Dublin.
 Poolbeg, 1995 ISBN : 057117 5791

Frank Murphy, *Lockie and Dadge*. Dublin.
 O'Brien, 1995 ISBN : 086278 4247 (Merit
 Award, & Eilis Dillon Perpetual Trophy for
 author of outstanding first children's book)

Siobhan Parkinson, *All shining in the spring*.
 Dublin. O'Brien, 1995 ISBN : 086278 3879

Gabriel Rosenstock, *Naomb Pádraig agus
 Crom Dubh* (illustrated by Piet Sluis).
 Baile Atha Cliath. An Gum, 1995
 ISBN : 185791 144X

Martin Waddell, *John Joe and the big hen*.
 Walker, 1995 ISBN : 074452 5705

Publications

The Department of Education Northern
 Ireland have published two documents relating
 to education in Northern Ireland.

The Charter for Further Education sets out
 standards of service that students, employers
 and members of the local community can
 expect to receive from FE colleges in Northern
 Ireland.

The Strategic Plan for Education 1996-2000
 was published in May 1996. The document
 sets out the mission and aims of the education
 service; an overview of the context within
 which it works; the themes and actions which
 will be given priority for the period 1996-2000
 and strategies for each sector of the service.

Copies of both documents are available
 from DENI, Further Education Branch,
 Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor,
 Co. Down, BT19 7PR.

*A Directory of Business Information for Northern
 Ireland* was published in July 1996. It has been
 compiled with the assistance of the Business
 Information Forum and issued by the Business
 Information Co-ordinating Committee
 (BICC). The Directory lists information
 available from business information providers
 and identifies contact points for various types of
 business enquiry. Its focus is on public sector
 providers of business information and advice.
 Copies of the Directory are available from Liam
 Parker, Assistant Chief Librarian, Belfast Central
 Library, Royal Avenue, Belfast BT1 1EA.
 Tel: 01232 243233.

The Directory is also accessible on the
 Internet at <http://www.nics.gov.uk/ded/infdir/>

Two leaflets describing services offered by
 Government libraries in Northern Ireland have
 recently been published.

The Government Library Service and You
 leaflet outlines the services provided by, and
 contacts in, the Government Library Service
 (GLS). GLS is a network of library and
 information centres in Government
 Departments and Agencies throughout
 Northern Ireland.

The leaflet *The Library and Information
 Service (Department of Agriculture for Northern
 Ireland)* outlines that library's services, subject
 coverage and what facilities and services a user
 can expect. Opening hours, location and a list
 of contacts are also given.

Both leaflets are available from Kirby Porter,
 Business Development Service, Resource
 Library, Craigantlet Buildings, Stoney Road,
 Belfast BT4 3SX.
 Tel: 01232 527432
 Fax: 01232 527447
 E-mail: k.porter.bds@nics.gov.uk

Honorary doctorate for NLI Director

The National University of Ireland conferred the Degree of Doctor of Literature, *honoris causa*, (the highest award of the University) on Patricia Donlon, Director, National Library of Ireland, at a ceremony in University College Galway on 24th June 1996.

People

Jess Codd, DLIS, Assistant Librarian, Tipperary County Library, has joined the Editorial Board of *An Leabharlann The Irish Library* in place of Damien Brady who has resigned.

Linda Houston, BLS, ALA, has been appointed Assistant Chief Librarian in charge of public services with the North Eastern Education and Library Board. She was formerly Health and Welfare Librarian and part time Executive Officer with the Library and Information Services Council (LISC) NI. She is a former Chair of the Library Association (NI Branch) and is currently Honorary Treasurer of LISC (NI).

Margaret Lantry, MA, HDE, MA (Lib), MIIInfSc, has been appointed Managing Editor, *Thesaurus Linguarum Hiberniae* (CURIA project), Royal Irish Academy. Previously, she was Edition Manager, Royal Historical Society British Bibliographies Project, University of Cambridge.

Grainne McCabe, BA, DLIS, formerly with McCann Fitzgerald Solicitors, is now working for the Library, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and currently is based in Beaumont Hospital.

Gail McKinley, MA, ALA has been appointed part time Executive Officer to LISC (NI). She replaces Linda Houston. Gail is

Principal Librarian in charge of service development with the Western Education and Library Board. She takes up duty with LISC (NI) on the 1 August 1996. She can be contacted at WELB Library HQ, Spillars Place, Omagh BT78 1HL.

Tel: 01662 244821.

Fax: 01662 246716.

Ciaran Mangan, BA, MLIS, has been promoted to Assistant Librarian, Louth County Council

Henry Morrin, BE (Mech), DLIS, previously Librarian, Telecom Eireann, has been appointed Librarian with South Dublin County Council.

Norman Russell, BA, MPhil, ALA, Queen's University of Belfast, has been appointed to the Research Subcommittee of the Library and Information Commission. He is also the new Chair of LISC (NI) following the resignation of David Welch, Chief Librarian, SEELB.

Deborah Shorley, BA, ALA, University of Ulster, has been appointed to the International Subcommittee of the Library and Information Commission.

Sheila Tierney, BA, DLIS, has been appointed Assistant Librarian in Louth. Previously, Sheila worked in Offaly County Council.

Welcome to new Library Association of Ireland members: **Sue Acheson, Jackie Bernard, Instituto Cervantes, Anthony Linnane, Mabel Lopez, Sarah McLoughlin, Rosa Meehan, Valerie Seymour.**



Obituaries

BRIGHID DOLAN

BRIGHID DOLAN MA, DLT was very well-known in the library world as Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy from 1969 to 1990 and afterwards as Curator of Manuscripts until 1993, when she reached retirement age. There was a proliferation of new projects in the Academy – the late sixties and early seventies brought the New History of Ireland, Focloir na Nua-Ghaeilge, the Hiberno-Latin Dictionary (now Dictionary of Medieval Latin from Celtic Sources), etc. The librarian had to provide for the needs of a growing number of staff while dealing with problems of space, shrinking budgets and, later, an embargo on recruitment of staff.

Conscious that the library should be brought further into the 20th century that it should be made more “user-friendly”, Brigid made a policy of welcoming group visits to the library and of speaking to various interest groups. She gave annual lectures to the Library and Information Studies Department and the Archives Dept. UCD. (Her first talk given outside Dublin was in 1979 appropriately in Co Tipperary, to the Ormond Historical Society, Nenagh). Thus Brigid strove to make the manuscript treasures of the Academy, the national treasures, known to the people of Ireland. During her tenure of office the restoration and rebinding of the vellums was put into operation and the manuscripts in the Irish language were made available on microfilm.

Many visitors to the library profited from her knowledge of the historical sources for nineteenth-century Ireland (her MA thesis *Introduction of the Poor Law to Ireland 1831 – 1838*) and her experience in the State Papers Office 1960 – 1967. She gave help and advice to the trainees – in library and archives – who gained experience in the Academy library.

As a member of the Library Association of Ireland over the years Brigid had many roles – serving on the Committee of the University and Special Libraries Section and on COLICO. A founder-member of the Rare Books Group, she chaired the group from its inception to 1989, and continued to participate in all its activities.

Heart surgery in 1988 slowed her activities a little but did nothing to dim her interest in current events or weaken her enthusiasms – which included rejoicing in a Tipperary hurling victory, following the activities of the Irish soccer team and attending the annual Laytown Races.

Brigid took an interest in people, tried to give a helping hand or find a solution to a problem. She loved to celebrate togetherness – loved the old-fashioned sing-song, always calling for the old favourites. She issued open invitations to “Inis Samer”, her summer home at the mouth of the Boyne. Often when on leave, “the heavens opened” but her last

Summer there was the idyllic summer of 1995, which she fully enjoyed.

Her husband, sister, family and friends suffered a great loss on her sudden death on December 4th 1995, as did her colleagues who had become her friends. She will be often remembered, especially when we hear the strains of “Slievenamon”.

Íde Ní Thuama, Deputy Librarian, Royal Irish Academy

MARY MOORE

MARY MOORE was too young to die. She was only 45 years old when she passed away on 26 August 1996, after a long and courageous fight against illness.

Mary’s whole working life revolved around libraries. A graduate of UCD, she obtained the Diploma in Librarianship in 1975 and, having worked briefly in London and, subsequently, in the Dublin Corporation Public Library Service, she spent most of her professional career as Librarian in what is now the Department of the Marine. She held this post from 1980 until 1994, when she joined the staff of the Oireachtas Library.

Dedicated to the development and improvement of library services and the betterment of the profession, Mary was for several years a member of the Executive Board of the Library Association of Ireland as well as a founding member of the Government Libraries Group, where she served for periods as chairperson and secretary. She did trojan work within the group and was of enormous help and support to her colleagues.

While I had met Mary on several occasions over the years, it was only when she joined us in the Oireachtas Library in October 1994 that she became a great friend, as well as a colleague. I was immediately struck by her great enthusiasm for and, in particular, her enjoyment of, her work. Even when receiving treatment for her illness, she astonished everyone, and especially her doctors, by insisting on coming into the office. She was a most stimulating person with whom to work – she was always full of plans and ideas and had a great talent for organisation. I think that what I will remember most about Mary, however, was her unfailing cheerfulness and her great sense of humour. She was like a breath of fresh air and to hear her laugh was better than any tonic!

Mary had a great capacity for friendship and will long be remembered by her many colleagues and friends. Knowing her has enriched our lives immeasurably. To her heartbroken family, in particular her mother, sister and brothers, we extend our deepest sympathy.

Maura Corcoran, Librarian, Oireachtas Library

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

THIS LISTING RECORDS publications relating to the library and information profession in Ireland. Items for inclusion should be sent to the Reviews Editor, Agnes Neligan, The Library, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Republic of Ireland. Tel: +353-1-708 3880. Fax: +353-1-628 6008. E-mail: aneligan@may.ie.

General librarianship

Accent on access. Proceedings of an Irish Joint Conference held 19-22 April, 1994, Enniskillen. Dublin: The Library Association of Ireland and The Library Association: Northern Ireland Branch, 1995. 117p. ISBN 0 946037 27 2(LAI); 0 906066 10 7(LA:NIB)

Bell, Robert. A democracy of print: the periodical literature of the Northern Ireland troubles. *Linen Hall Review*, 11(3), 1994, 9-11.

Breathnach, Diarmuid agus Máire Ní Mhurchú. *1882-1982 beathaisnéis a ceathair.* Baile Átha Cliath: Clóchomhar, 1994. 191p.

Breslin, Liam. The information society- Irish feast or Irish famine?. Unpublished speech given at a European Movement Briefing luncheon, Dublin 24 April, 1995. Typescript, 14p.

Burrington, Gill. The social and economic role of libraries and librarians. In: *The accent on access.* Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp24-32.

Casserly, Theresa. Implications of change for staff training and development. In: Joseph Donnelly and Valerie McKernan, eds., *Managing organisational change.* Dublin: IIS(Irish Branch)/LAI(USLS), 1995, pp27-34.

Committee on Library Co-operation in Ireland. *Annual report for the year 1993.* Dublin: Colico, 1995. 5p.

Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht Vision/Fís, 1, Spring 1995- Dublin: Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, 1995-

Donnelly, Joseph and Valerie McKernan, eds. *Managing organisational change. Proceedings of the 1993 Joint Annual Seminar of the Institute of Information Scientists(Irish Branch) and the Library Association of Ireland (University and Special Libraries Section) held on 21st May 1993, Dublin.* Dublin: IIS(Irish Branch)/LAI(USLS), 1995. 45p. ISBN 0 9500479 8 8(IIS); 0 946037 28 0(LAI)

Doran, Beatrice. Continuing library education. In:

The accent on access. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp33-41.

Fallon, Helen. Out of Africa: two years as a tutor/librarian in Sierra Leone. *An Leabharlann*, 11(1), 1994, 19-30.

Farmer, Tony. *A brief history of Clé: 1970-1995.* Dublin: Irish Book Publishers' Association, 1995. (Published for private circulation). 24p.

Gill, Michael. Book publishing: present reality – future challenge. In: *The accent on access.* Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp 42-51.

Library Association of Ireland. *Professional register and membership list 1994.* Dublin: The Association, 1995. 35p. ISSN 0791 8046

Library Association of Ireland. *Annual Report 1994.* Dublin: The Association, 1995. 58p. ISSN 0791-6248

Literary calendar 1995 (featuring a tribute to Eilis Dillon). Dublin: Revenue Commissioners, 1995. Calendar

Martin, Bill. Organisational change as context and imperative. In: Joseph Donnelly and Valerie McKernan, eds., *Managing organisational change.* Dublin: IIS(Irish Branch)/LAI(USLS), 1995, 3-13.

Money matters in libraries 11: performance management and evaluation. Proceedings of the Annual Joint Seminar, 24 March, 1995. Dublin: University and Special Libraries Section of the Library Association of Ireland and the Institute of Information Scientists(Irish Branch), 1995.

Murphy, Yvonne. A visit to the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. Stanford University, California, July 1993. *Linen Hall Review*, 11(1), 5-9. *Newsplan News.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Newsplan, 1995-

O'Dwyer, J.J. Managing change in large organisations. In: Joseph Donnelly and Valerie McKernan, eds., *Managing organisational change.* Dublin: IIS (Irish Branch)/ LAI (USLS), 1995, pp22-26.

Phillips, Seán. Collection or access – a false dichotomy.

In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp52-58.

Phillips, Sean. Copyright law in the Republic of Ireland. *An Leabharlann*, 11(1), 1994, 31-33.

Ruth, Sean. A positive approach to dealing with resistance to change. In: Joseph Donnelly and Valerie McKernan, eds., *Managing organisational change*. Dublin: IIS (Irish Branch), / LAI(USLS), 1995, pp14-21.

Sheehan, Paul. Reconsidering the divide: the changing roles of professional and non-professional staff. *An Leabharlann*, 11(2), 1994, 87-90.

Smith, Michael. Speech after the conference dinner (Enniskillen, 1994). In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp97-101.

Bibliographies

Archaeology higher degree theses held in Irish universities. *Trowel*, 5, 1994, 50-67.

Calendar of Kinsale documents. v.3 Kinsale Grand Jury presentments 1720-1731. Kinsale: Regional Museum, 1994. 103p.

Canning, Joseph. Select bibliography of material relating to Armagh Diocesan History. *Seanchas Árd Mhacha*, 16(1), 1994, 272-275.

Canning, Joseph. Select bibliography relating to Armagh diocesan history. (continued from 14 (1), 1990). *Seanchas Árd Mhacha*, 15(2), 1993, 249-257.

Coakley, John and John Doyle. Select bibliography of publications on Irish politics during 1994. *Irish Political Studies*, 10, 1995, 340-359.

Coakley, John and Richard English. Select bibliography of publications on politics during 1993. *Irish Political Studies*, 9, 1994, 247-256.

Combat Poverty Agency. *New books in the library* – published bi-monthly. Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency, 1995-

Cullinan, Monica. Bibliography: Irish women. *Journal of Women's History*, 6(4)/7(1), 1995.

Descriptive list of the papers of Liam Ó Buachalla, Banteer, Co. Cork (1882-1941). Cork: Cork Archives Institute, 1994. 111, 42p. ISBN 1899265007

Dunbar, Robert, ed. *Children's book festival reading list 94/95*. Dublin: Children's Literature Association of Ireland and the Youth Library Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1994.

Finnegan, Richard B. and James L. Wiles. *Irish government publications: a select list 1972-1992*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1995. ISBN 0 7165 2524 0

Holland, Steve. *An index to Mellifont Press: a working*

bibliography. Leeds?: Stephenson-Payne?, 1995. 76p. ISBN 1871133432

Index to the acts of the Oireachtas passed in the year 1988. Dublin: Stationery Office, 1995. 88p. ISBN 0 7076 0421 4

Irish politics postgraduate register. *Political Studies Association of Ireland Bulletin*, 21, 1995, 38-44.

Killen, John. *An index to the Microscope (1799-1800) and to the Belfast Literary Journal (1816)*. (Includes microfiche of both magazines). Belfast: The Linen Hall Library, 1994. 117p.

Kinane, Vincent. Trinity Closet Press 1973-1994: a chronology and a bibliography. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 60-63.

Mac Conghail, Muiris. The literature of the Blasket Islands: an additional bibliographical note. *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society*, 24, 1991, 69-71.

McAllister, Kate, ed. *Irish periodicals published before 1901*. Omagh: Library Local Studies Panel, 1995. 95p. ISBN 0951651013

McAnlis, Virginia Wade. *The consolidated index to the records of the Genealogical Office, Dublin, Ireland*. 2v. v1 a-c, v2 d-h. Issaquah, WA: The Author, 1994.

Milles, James. *Smurfit Irish Law Centre bibliographic guide*. 12th ed. Saint Louis, Mo.: School of Law Library, Saint Louis University, 1994. 166p.

Ó Rónáin, Liam. Donegal local publications 1994. *Donegal Annual*, 1994, 125-129.

O'Connell, Deirdre. A bibliography of Irish labour history, 1991-92. *Saothar*, 18, 1993, 110-125.

O'Connell, Deirdre. A bibliography of Irish labour history, 1992-1993. *Saothar*, 19, 1994, 159-172.

Register of theses on educational topics in universities in Ireland, supplement 1994. Cork: Educational Studies Association of Ireland, 1995. 14p.

Rigney, T.J. *Register of theses on accounting /finance and related topics in higher education institutions in Ireland 1993*. Cork: Regional Technical College, 1995.

Sligo County Library. *Sligo: sources of local history: a catalogue of the local history collection*. Sligo: County Library, 1994. xxii, 257p.

Swords, Liam. Calendar of Irish material in the files of Jean Fromont, notary at Paris, May 1701-24 Jan. 1730, in the Archives Nationales, Paris: Part 2, 1716-1730. *Collectanea Hibernica*, 36/37, 1994/95, 85-139.

Tierney, Mark. A short title calendar of the papers of Michael Slattery in Archbishop's House, Thurles: part 5, 1848. *Collectanea Hibernica*, 36/37, 1994/95, 243-270.

Wing, Donald. *Short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America*,

and of English books printed in other countries, 1641-1700. 2nd ed., newly rev. and enl. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1994. v.1 ISBN 0873526619

Woods, C. J. Theses on Irish history completed in Irish universities, 1993. *Irish Historical Studies*, 29(114), 1994, 250-251.

Writings on Irish railways. *Journal of the Irish Railway Record Society*, 18(124), 1994, 399-400.

Writings on Irish railways. *Journal of the Irish Railway Record Society*, 19(127), 1995, 70-71.

Genealogy and heritage

Browne, Kathleen. Heritage awareness. *The Kerry magazine*, 6, 1995, 43-45.

Dublin Heritage Group. *Sixth annual report for the year ending 31st December 1994*. Dublin: Dublin Public Libraries, 1994. 42p. ISSN 0791-8569

Higgins, Jim and Susanne Heringklee, eds. *Monuments of St. Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway: a historical, genealogical and archaeological record*. Galway: Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, 1995. ISBN 1 871137 20 9

Information technology

Cullen, Clara. Internet: a few facts. *An Leabharlann*, 11(2), 1994, 91-93.

Smith, John. *Accessing the Internet: a guide for the UK and Ireland*. London: International Thomson Publishing, 1994. 164p. ISBN 1 850 32147 7

Teskey, Patrick. Promoting networked information services: challenges and opportunities. *An Leabharlann*, 11(2), 1994, 77-86.

Public libraries

APT Partnership for LINC. *The APT review: a review of library and information co-operation in the UK and Republic of Ireland*. (BLRDD report 6212). Sheffield: LINC, 1995. ISBN 10873753 06 3

Brown, S. TRIP for library systems at Belfast City Council. *TIP Applications*, 8(6/7), 1994/95, 3-6.

Bulletin: Supplement to Information Update, Staff Newsletter of the Dublin Corporation Public Library Service, No. 1, January 1995- Dublin: Corporation Public Library Service, 1995-

Burke, Margaret. I've seen all the films – but they

always tell me the book is better. In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp80-96.

Dublin City Libraries powers major new international literary award. *An Leabharlann*, 11(2), 1994, 95-96.

Dublin Corporation Public Libraries. *Coolock community directory 1995*. Dublin: Dublin Corporation Public Libraries, 1995. 72p. ISBN 0 946841 11X

Dublin's library of the future. (DS Galaxy 2000). *Dublin Corporation Staff Newsletter*, No.9, 1995, 2.

Ellis-King, Deirdre. Adult continuing education and Irish public libraries: some considerations and findings which arise from a study into practice and potential for service development. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 27(1), 1995, 7-15.

Farrow, Russell. Rural communities – the challenge. In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp71-79.

General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland. *Turning over a new leaf, the public library service: a report*. Belfast: General Consumer Council for N.I., 1995. 2v. ISBN 1 871095 17 4

IMPAC. *The International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award*. Dublin: Dublin City Public Libraries, 1995. 10p.

International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award: a glittering prize. *Dublin Corporation Staff Newsletter*, No. 9, 1995, 1.

Leabharlann Chathair Phort Láirge. Waterford: Waterford Corporation, 1995. 12p. ISBN 1897775024

Meaney, Seamus. Meeting the need: provision of community information services in Dublin Public Libraries. *An Leabharlann*, 11(1), 1994, 13-18.

Ó Raghail, Muiris. The public library service: a force for tradition, renewal, change – part one. *Local Authority Times*, 1(9), 1995, 10.

Ó Raghail, Muiris. The public library service: a force for tradition, renewal, change – part two. *Local Authority Times*, 1(10), 1995, 8-9.

O'Hagan, Sheila, ed. *A collection of writings from Kildare*. Newbridge: Kildare County Library, 1994.

O'Reilly, Joe. *From Clonsast to Ballyburley*. Tullamore: Offaly County Library, 1995.

Official opening of South Dublin County Library (Tallaght). *Local Authority Times*, 1(8), 1994, p.12.

Pakanen, Aulikki. Liike-elaman tietoa ja tietokantoja-Business Information Centre Irlannissa. *Signum*, 28(2), 1995, 35-36.

Public libraries and adult literacy. *NALA News: The Journal of the Adult Literacy Agency*, June 1995, 4, 17-20.

Public library financial statistics. *Irish Library News*, Supplement, May 1995. 4p.

Quigley, Patricia. Beyond books: public libraries and self-directed learners. *An Leabharlann*, 11(2), 1994, 69-76.

Sumsion, John, Measuring up: performance indicators old and new. In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp7-23.

Tobin, Joan, ed. Deirdre Ellis-King, Dublin City and County Librarian. In: *Work, jobs, careers* edited by Joan Tobin. Dublin: Keelaun, 1995, pp 12-13.

UNESCO Public library manifesto 1994 (adopted by the Library Association of Ireland April 1995). Dublin: The Library Association of Ireland, 1995. Leaflet

UNESCO public library manifesto. *An Leabharlann*, 11(1), 1994, 35-37.

Worpole, Ken, A civil place: the public library and the public realm. In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp1-6.

Special libraries

ASTI library and information service. ASTIR: *The Journal of the Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland*, 24(8), 1994, 2.

Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive. *Seanchas Árd Mhacha*, 16(1), 1994, 236-239.

Chester Beatty Library Strategic plan 1995-2000. Dublin: The Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, 1995. 28p.

Combat Poverty Agency, Library and information service. Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency, 1994. Leaflet

Donlon, Patricia, An unexamined life is not worth living: implementing change – the case of the National Library. In: Joseph Donnelly and Valerie McKernan, eds., *Managing organisational change*. Dublin: IIS(Irish Branch)/LAI(USLS), 1995, pp35-43.

Ennis, Martina, Bessbrook Library. *Ulster Architect*, 9(11), 1992, 22-23.

Hogan, Brian, New law library, Church Street. *Irish Architect*, 105, 1995, 12-15.

Huxley, G. L. The Royal Irish Academy Library: on some books about Greek and the Greeks. *Classics Ireland*, 2, 1995, 82-87.

Kirwan, E.M., Prints and drawings in the National Library. *History Ireland*, 3(2), 1995, 48-52.

Linen Hall Library Annual report 1994. Belfast: Linen Hall Library, 1995. 29p.

Linen Hall news. *Linen Hall Review*, 11(1), 1994, 38-40.

MacDougall, Jennifer. *Information for health: access to healthcare information services in Ireland*. Dublin: Library Association of Ireland, 1995. 64p. ISBN 0

946037 29 9

MacDougall, Jennifer. *Information for health: access to healthcare information services in Ireland – Summary*. Dublin: Library Association of Ireland, 1995. 8p. ISBN 0 946037 29 9

Porter, Kirby. Libraries and the management of information in the Northern Ireland civil service. *An Leabharlann*, 11(1), 1994, 5-12.

Manuscripts and archives

Bird, Stephen, Sources of Irish labour history in the Archives and Study Centre of the National Museum of Labour History, Manchester. *Saothar*, 19, 1994, 120-121.

Cains, Anthony, Roger Powell and his early Irish manuscripts in Dublin. In: Nicholas Hadgraft and Katherine Swift, eds., *Conservation and preservation in small libraries*. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College: Parker Library Publications, 1994, pp151-156. ISBN 1 897852 02 9

Clancy, Mary, Sources of labour interest in Galway County Library. *Saothar*, 18, 1993, 93-94.

Crowe, Catriona, Some sources in the National Archives for women's history. *Saothar*, 19, 1994, 109-114.

Devine, Francis, Labour records in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland : some recent deposits. *Saothar*, 19 1994, 115.

Devine, Francis, Trade union records in the Registry of Friendly Societies, Dublin and the National Archives. *Saothar*, 19, 1994, 115-118.

Henry, Brian, Archives and research: new department and new premises for the National Archives of Ireland. *Perspectives: Newsletter of the American Historical Association*, 32(2), 1994, ?

Hunter, Jennifer, Irish Labour History Society Museum and Archive. *Saothar*, 18, 1993, 87-88.

Hynes, Tina, Dublin County Council archives as a source for labour history. *Saothar*, 18, 1993, 95.

Killen, John, Purchase of the Rutherford Mayne archive. *Linen Hall Review*, 11(2), 1994, 19.

Lohan, Rena, The archives of the Office of Public Works: their value as a source for local history. *Irish Archives*, Autumn, 1994, 26-47.

Lyne, Gerard J. Labour history sources in the National Library of Ireland. *Saothar*, 19, 1994, 118.

McGing, B.C., *Greek papyri from Dublin*. Bonn: Habelt, 1995. xxviii, 203p. ISBN 3774926565

Murphy, Della, The records of F. Barrett & Co., lighthouse engineers, Schoolhouse Lane, Dublin 2. *Irish*

Archives, Autumn, 1994, 48-50.

Ó Dúshlaine, Tadhg, The religious mind of Maynooth's Gaelic manuscripts. In: Agnes Neligan, ed., *Maynooth library treasures*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995, pp 91-111. ISBN 1 874045 24 0

O'Rafferty, Siobhan, Labour history sources in the Royal Irish Academy. *Saothar*, 18, 1993, 89-92.

O'Riordan, Colum A different sort of archive? (Irish Architectural Archive). *Irish Archives*, Autumn, 1994, 51-52.

Quinlan, Tom, The registered papers of the Chief Secretary's Office. *Irish Archives*, Autumn, 1994, 5-21.

Rauchbauer, Otto, *The Edith AEone Somerville archive in Drishane: a catalogue and an evaluative essay*. Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1995. 268p. ISBN 1 874280 05 3

Richardson, Regina Whelan, The Salamanca archives. In: Agnes Neligan, ed., *Maynooth library treasures*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995, pp 112-147. ISBN 1 874045 24 0

Richardson, Regina Whelan, ed., *The Salamanca letters: a catalogue of correspondence (1619-1871) from the archives of the Irish colleges in Spain in the library of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland*. Maynooth: St. Patrick's College, 1995. x,604p. ISBN 0901519952

Seymour, Valerie, Architectural plans and drawings. In: *Maynooth library treasures*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995, pp 167-194. ISBN 1 874045 24 0

Silvester, Nic, The Cathal O'Shannon papers in the ILHS Archive. *Saothar*, 19, 1994, 107-109.

Ward, Alex, Labour history sources in the Grand Lodge of Ireland archives. *Saothar*, 18, 1993, 92-93.

Academic libraries

Cleary, Ann. *Results of user interviews in relation to proposed new library*. Dundalk: Regional Technical College, 1994. Unpublished report

Doran, Beatrice M. Marketing medical school libraries. In: Tony McSean, John van Loo and Euphemia Coutinho, eds., *Health information – new possibilities*. London: Kluwer, 1995, pp67-71.

Mills, P.W., Dun's Library: the library of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. *Journal of the Irish Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons*, 24(2), 1995, 124-. New librarian at Trinity College Dublin. *Friends of the Library Trinity College Dublin Newsletter*, 27, 1995, 1 – 2.

O'Farrell, Jack, Working towards a library without walls (Bibdel project at DCU). *LA Record*, 97(3), 1995, 155-156.

TCD buys first book printed in Irish. *History Ireland*, 3(2), 1995, 6.

History and rare books

Bateman, Dilys, A Corkman and a controversial Bible: McNamara and the Rhemish Notes. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 33-38.

Benson, Charles, A Dublin printer's strike of 1840-41. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 43-47

Bibliophile's diary number six. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 7-17.

Bolg an Tsolair or Gaelic Magazine, No.1, 1795. Facsimile edition, limited to 100 copies. Belfast: Linen Hall Library, 1995. 132p. ISBN 0 9508985 9 7

Cains, Anthony, In-situ treatment of manuscripts and printed books in Trinity College, Dublin. In: Nicholas Hadgate and Katherine Swift, eds., *Conservation and preservation in small libraries*. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College: Parker Library Publications, 1994, pp127-131. ISBN 1 897852 02 9

Casey, Christine, Architectural line-engraving in Dublin 1700-1780. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 19-29.

Dixon, Roger, The splendid press of Messrs Marcus Ward & Company. *Linen Hall Review*, 11(2), 1994, 4-6.

Faulkner, George, *The humble petition of George Faulkner and George Grierson, printers and booksellers*. Golden, Colo: Fulcrum Publishing, 1993. (originally printed in 1745). viii, 8p.

Fenning, Hugh, Prayer-books and pamphlets: 1700-1829. *Seanchas Árd Mhacha*, 16(1), 1994, 93-99.

Gray, John, James Wood and the strange death of liberal Ulster- Linen Hall exhibition. *Linen Hall Review*, 11(2), 16-17.

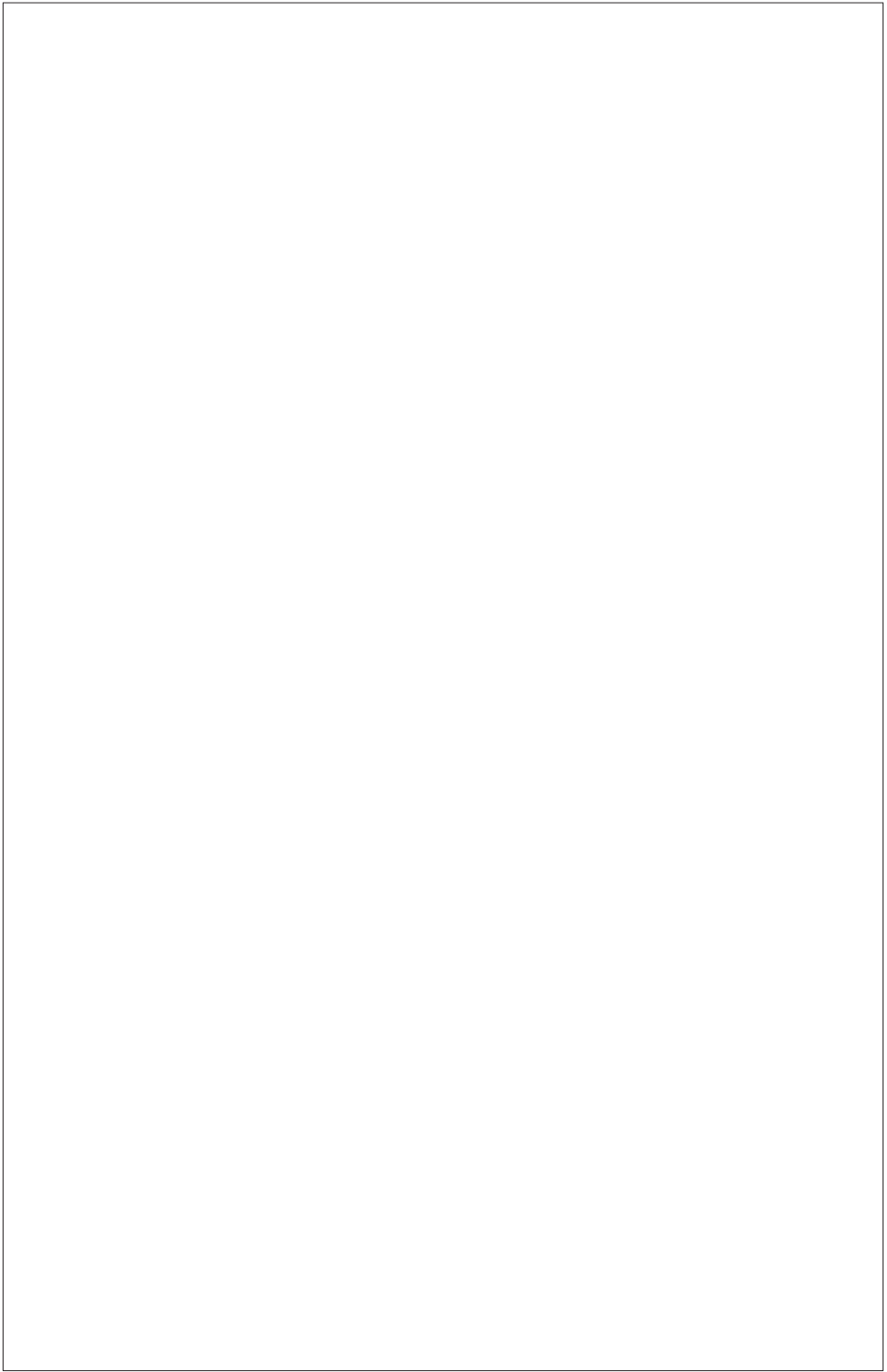
Greene, John C., *The Dublin stage, 1720-1745: a calendar of plays, entertainments, and afterpieces*. London: Associated University Presses, 1993. 473p.

Kennedy, Maire, The top twenty French authors in eighteenth-century Irish private libraries. *Linen Hall Review*, 12(1), 1995, 4-8.

Lewis, Gifford, Gifford and Craven: a small press in Dublin and Co. Cork, founded in 1972. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 55-59.

Maslen, Keith, The Bowyer ledgers: retrospect and prospect. In: D.R. Harvey, Wallace Kirsop and B.J.McMullin, eds., *An index of civilisation: studies of printing and publishing history in honour of Keith Maslen*. Clayton, Victoria: Centre for Bibliographical and Textual Studies, Monash University, 1993, pp1-14. xiii, 249p. ISBN 0732604672

McCann, Wesley, Private collections in public places.



- In: *The accent on access*. Dublin: LAI/LA(NIB), 1995, pp59-70.
- McCarthy, Muriel, and Caroline Sherwood-Smith, comp. *The triumph of antiquity: an exhibition of rare books relating to classical antiquity in Marsh's Library*. Dublin: Archbishop Marsh's Library, 1995. 72p.
- McGuinne, Dermot, Market testing in the early nineteenth century: printing the Bible in the Irish character. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 39-42.
- McGuinne, Dermot, Irish printing types: a Franco-Italian connection. *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 68, 1993, 115-127.
- Meehan, Bernard, *The book of Kells: an illustrated introduction to the manuscript in Trinity College Dublin*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1994. 95p.
- Montgomery, Ian, An entire and coherent history of Ireland: Richard Cox's Hibernia Anglicana. *Linen Hall Review*, 12(1), 1995, 9-11.
- Morrow, Veronica, An unrecorded Grolier binding. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 30-31.
- Neligan, Agnes, The library: looking back, 1995-1800. In: Agnes Neligan, ed., *Maynooth library treasures*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995, pp 3-28. ISBN 1 874045 24 0
- Neligan, Agnes, ed. *Maynooth library treasures: from the collections of St. Patrick's College*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995. v111,198p. ISBN 1 874045 24 0
- Ní Uigín, Dorothy, Nuachtáin Ghaeilge na hÉireann ón Dara Cogadh Domhnda i leith. M.A. Thesis, University College Galway, 1993.
- O'Loughlin, Thomas, The library of Iona in the late seventh century: the evidence from Adomnan's De Locis Sanctis. *Eriu*, 45, 1994, 33-52.
- Raven, James, Serial advertisement in eighteenth-century Britain and Ireland. In: Robin Myers and M. Harris, eds., *Serials and their readers*, 1620-1914. Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1993, pp102-122. xxii, 170p. ISBN 1873040202
- Sessions, William K., *Further Irish studies in early printing history*, 1. *William Penn's tract printing in Cork in 1670*. 2. *The travelling printer with William 111 in 1690*. York: William K. Sessions, the Ebor Press, 1994. ISBN 1 85072 146 7
- Seymour, Valerie, The Bible in Maynooth. In: Agnes Neligan, ed., *Maynooth library treasures*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995, pp 64-90. ISBN 1 874045 24 0
- Simpson, W. G., The Fleet Printing Company: recalling a trade printing house in the early 1950s. *Long Room*, 39, 1994, 49-53.
- Woods, Penelope, Books rich, rare and curious. In: Agnes Neligan, ed., *Maynooth library treasures*. Dublin:

Reviews

William J Martin. **The global information society**. London: Aslib Gower, 1996. 249pp.
ISBN 0566 077159. Stg £32.00.

THE INFORMATION SOCIETY is one of those perennial topics that authors seem to think we constantly need reminding about. I write this in a week the European Commission has declared an Information Society awareness week, though I doubt any readers outside Sligo, which hosts an exhibition about EU plans for the Information Society, will have much awareness of it. In some sense the Information Society is slipping from being a great debate to being just an agenda item on some European action plan, but Professor Bill Martin has done his best to rescue us from that. In a timely second edition of his 1988 work on the same topic, which has been sufficiently reworked and updated to merit a different title, the author has tackled this immense topic in a readable and comprehensive book that will be very useful for students. Readers familiar with the first edition will find many more Australian examples and references, some updated Irish ones, new material on current topics like the Internet, and discussion of recent developments in information management, information industries, and global information exchange.

The size of the topic is apparent in the range of issues Martin manages to encompass within one volume. That, indeed, is both the strength and weakness of the book. Readers will find here an extensive parade of opinions, events, issues, and facts, all organised into a coherent and readable narrative. Martin's technique is to describe opinions or events, raise problems or questions, summarise, and make judgements, often about policy. The book is indeed an excellent review of its subject and any one wanting a starting point on the idea of, for example, Information will find it in chapter two, Economics of Information in chapter five, or Information Management, chapter eight, and so on. Readers will find this a good starting point for inquiry, but, covering so much, this book cannot take us deep into topics that are central to an understanding of the idea of the information society. This is disappointing, for the publishers claim that the book offers a new way of looking at society. In fact, Martin's concentration is on issues of industry, business, and management, and, although social issues are discussed, (in chapter six), they do not get the extensive coverage, nor are they the central focus of analysis that we might expect. For that reason, this work should be read alongside other more specialised works, such as Nico Stehr's *Knowledge Societies*, which does attempt to understand and explain the role played by knowledge in modern advanced industrial societies, to examine 'the black box', as Stehr calls it, of knowledge.

Martin is sensibly cautious about the idea of the information society and about claims made of progress towards it. His focus is on what is happening, and he tends to eschew long-term predictions or judgements. He does claim (p12) that he offers a pluralistic approach to the idea of the information society and current developments, but this seems

to come down to emphasizing the idea of the commodification of information as being as important as the impact of information technology. On page fourteen he claims that we need "a much deeper understanding of the qualitative dimension to information", a statement with which we can all agree, but I would have liked a final concluding chapter to the book to show just how this had been achieved.

The Irish reader will feel that Martin, writing from within the Australian context, has broadened his approach to the Information Society to justify the global in his title, but in a way which makes it accessible to us all. There are a few small typographical oversights, but overall the book is well produced, with a nice clean look. The reader is furnished with an ample, twelve-page index and an extensive explanation of abbreviations and initials, though not all terms are explained – Baby Bells, for example, might confuse readers unfamiliar with US telecommunications. This book will be on UCD Department of Library and Information Studies reading lists in the coming academic year, though at this price I hesitate to require students to purchase it.

Ian Cornelius, Department of Library and Information Studies, University College Dublin.

Hans Prins and Wilco de Gier. **The image of the library and information profession: how we see ourselves – an investigation.** London: Saur, 1995. ISBN 3 598 21798 6.
(IFLA publication 71) 86p.

THE ISSUE OF PROFESSIONAL STATUS was formally raised by IFLA in 1986. IFLA's Round Table for the Management of Library Associations (RTMLA), to which seventy-five national organisations are affiliated, offered to consider the issues. As a result two Dutch social scientists undertook a major research project. The research was based on questionnaires and visits and the findings were presented to IFLA in Delhi in 1992. IFLA believed that these results were important enough to publish in full for a wider audience, hence this book.

RTMLA accepted that the status of librarians world-wide was low and the aim of the research project was to establish the reasons for this and to come up with recommendations for improvements. The researchers accepted the difficulties of addressing these issues world-wide and ambitions were modified to bring the survey into line with what was possible.

Most of the book is taken up with describing the survey methods and results but the most interesting chapters are those describing the concepts of image and identity and the causes for low status and poor image, though there is nothing new here. We are all aware of how image and identity do not coincide, the librarian seeing himself or herself as a professional building collections and making information available, the public seeing the librarian as someone who stamps books. Apparently there is little a profession can do to alter this situation, as negative images seem to lead a long and obstinate life. Over time, however, occupations slide up and down the ladder and new occupations appear. Is our

star in the ascendant or are we about to become obsolete? This book gives no clue.

The causes of low status and poor image are described. Invisibility is mentioned – the public have no idea what a librarian does. Nor do they distinguish between the librarian and other library staff. We have no economic function since libraries represent outgoings and contribute nothing to the economic growth of a country. The quality of service is considered to be generally on the low side, with librarians ignoring the users and concentrating too much on collections, users being regarded as a necessary evil. Training is poor. There is no professional integrity and, of course, there is the female angle.

The survey was in two parts – section one asking for factual data, section two asking for opinions. The response was poor, the statistical base being too small to analyse. Overall the response was 19.2%. The questionnaire was supplemented by interviews with respondents, selected primarily from the less-developed countries. The results of the interviews include some fascinating quotations from librarians. They range from the daft Australian who said that we need a new name, as librarians are called after buildings not after the work we do; to the sensible American librarian who said that “we have to stop worrying about status and devote energy to providing what our users think they need, plus what we know they need”.

The two and a half pages of conclusions epitomise the book as a whole, many useful comments negated by statements guaranteed to rise hackles. One paragraph begins “Libraries are not fast-moving dynamic organisations”. Once true, perhaps, but where have they been these last several years? And what is meant by “The library as a building with four walls containing books is a metaphor for the crisis with which we are dealing”? The paragraph on education hardly bears repeating: “LIS students attract second or third rate students for whom LIS is a last chance to become a graduate” and “Library skills are not always necessary and, if so, they can be obtained by in-service training”.

If you are worried about professional image, this text will not cheer you up. The most depressing thing is that the book reflects how a percentage of the profession sees itself. It would be unfair to blame the two Dutch social scientists. Some humour could have made it bearable. A recent Vincent Browne opinion column in *The Irish Times* (May 22 1996) has some good jokes covering most professions – except librarians. My favourite is : if you came across a journalist and a politician drowning in a lake would you (a) read the newspaper or (b) go to lunch? And we think we have problems.

Agnes Neligan, Deputy Librarian, St Patrick's College Maynooth.

William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, Mairead Dunlevy (editors).

Donegal history and society : interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county.

Dublin : Geography Publications, 1995. xxvii, 920p ISBN 0 906602459. £40.

THIS IS THE EIGHTH VOLUME in the Irish County History and Society series, and, like its predecessors, it is a substantial volume in every way. Nine hundred and forty-eight pages, twenty-seven chapters by twenty-eight eminent contributors, each chapter

generously endowed with notes and references, a thirty-nine page 'select bibliography' by one of the editors, a General Index and a Place Index, a scattering of plates, figures and maps. This is not by any definition bedtime reading. Inaccessible and remote, isolated from the rest of the country behind its barrier of mountains, and fringed by the wild Atlantic, Donegal has long been an enigma to the rest of Ireland, and has, in the words of the editors' foreword "looked to Scotland and Spain rather than to Dublin or London".

In a characteristically effervescent Réamhrá, Cathal Ó Searcaigh suggests that in this era of internationalism it is important that each parish and each little community raise its own standard on the flagpole of its individual identity, and in terms of Donegal that is what this book attempts to do. Brian Lacy, surveying prehistoric and early historic settlement from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age, notes that "approximately ten percent of all known megalithic tombs from the whole of Ireland can be found in County Donegal, indicating the relative importance of this area and the wealth and sophistication of its communities throughout the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age". Not many people know that. Michael Herity, connecting early Christian decorated cross slabs in the Loughros peninsula with the Turas Chonaill, Helen Lanigan Wood and Eithne Verling dealing with a tradition of stone carving from Iron Age stone heads to Christian pillars and crosses (notably those at Carndonagh), and Ragnall Ó Floinn on metalworking from Bronze Age finds in sandhill sites – all reveal a vitality and originality in cultural traditions developed in a geographically isolated region, remote from the larger centres of population and artistic fashions of the time.

Chapters dealing with the late medieval and Renaissance periods, when the power and influence of the O'Donnells spread far beyond the boundaries of the county, and Magnus Ó Domhnaill held court at Lifford in the style of a Renaissance prince, lead into those on the plantation of Ulster, when Sir Arthur Chichester was granted the whole of the Inishowen peninsula, and the remainder of the county was farmed out to English and Scottish settlers, with the exception of the Barony of Kilmacrenan, which was "assigned to servitors and native Irish". That the settlers did not always prosper in Donegal is shown in the chapter on the Murray of Broughton Estate in south Donegal, when in 1736 Alexander Crawford could write to his landlord 'there has been such famines for bread in these countries and great deaths of cattle and a kind of disease or murrain that the country is impoverished by it, which is the occasion, with rents or tithes, to cause the most part of the country to go to America'. The father and son who held Castletown, near Dunkineely, ran into arrears in the years 1735 – 37, 'then died for want of the necessaries of life'. These were not peasants squatting on an acre or two of poor land, these were tenant farmers with landholdings of upwards of 800 acres.

While landlord and settler still figure largely in the later chapters on urban development, rural economy, social unrest and agrarian revolution, here the native Irish come into the picture more fully, culminating in the chapter on the Gaoth Dobhair Sheep War of 1856 – 1860. A chapter on seasonal migration of agricultural labourers to the Lagan and Scotland relates the experience of generations of Donegal people hiring themselves out to supplement the subsistence level of the home economy. A contribution in Irish pro-

vides a history of literature in the Irish language from Donegal over a hundred years. The tradition of music and song, still strong in the Gaeltacht areas, and giving rise to the phenomenon of chart-topping songsters and musicians from in and about Gweedore today, gets two good chapters, one of them in Irish.

References to the great but isolated parish of Gaoth Dobhair are few and far between in the first five hundred pages of the book. References to the Dobhair or Gaoth Dobhair river as a boundary marker to one of the cantreds of Tír Chonaill, Tír Lughdhach, would appear to indicate some form of settlement, but no evidence or information seems to be forthcoming to fill in the picture. Was the find of some sherds of an Early Bronze Age food vessel, with a scattering of ox, sheep, pig and deer bones at Magheragallan merely evidence of a Bronze Age tourist establishing a tradition, still honoured in the area, of leaving one's litter on the beach after a day's outing? Was the ox in any way connected to the townland of my mother's birth – Min Doire Dhamh – the plain of the oak grove of the ox? How far back do these Min and Machaire place names go, and from what form of community did they evolve? The question is not addressed by Donall Mac Giolla Easpaig in the otherwise fascinating chapter on place names and early settlement in County Donegal, and time and again in the chapters on prehistory and early history of the county reference is made to this lack of evidence. "The amount and standard of archaeological research in Donegal have been mixed and discontinuous" says Brian Lacy on page one of this volume, and the same may be said of other areas of research. If this volume points up the gaps in the record, it will do the county a great service, and perhaps a second edition in ten years time will show a great improvement in the situation.

A new edition might also compensate for a great lack in this one of a good pull-out map; maps there are aplenty scattered throughout the text, and very good they are too, but they are small in scale and often lack detail. The chapter on place names is almost incomprehensible until one discovers a map two chapters further on which shows most of the boundaries and land divisions being discussed. This reader followed the course of Michael Herity's *turas* from Iniskeel to Gleanncholmcille on John Bartholomew's map from Ward Lock's *Pictorial and Descriptive Guide to the Donegal Highlands*, 4th edition 1914, which has now been pulled out of that work and inserted into the volume under consideration, to assist in identifying locations not recorded on the small maps. The Place Index could do with a little rethinking, too. The present one has separate entries for variants of the same name, so Bun Beag, An – 549, but Bunbeg – 91, 95, 98; Machaire Gathlain – 561, Magheragallan – 16. It would be helpful if the separate townlands and other localities were also indexed as subdivisions of the generic parish – in this case Gweedore (which has thirty page references) or Gaoth Dobhair (which has two).

These, however, are minor irritants in a volume which is scholarly, authoritative, yet curiously, also a very good read. Chapter after chapter reveals the richness of history and tradition in a county that deserves to be better known and appreciated.

Nodlaig P Hardiman, Divisional Librarian, Dublin Corporation Public Libraries.

Jennifer MacDougall. **Information for health: access to healthcare information services in Ireland, a research report on the information needs of healthcare professionals and the public.** Dublin : Library Association of Ireland, 1995. xiv, 63p. ISBN 0 946037 29 9. £10.00. (Available from Library Association of Ireland, 53 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2 or by fax order from Dublin Public Library on 00 353 1 676 1628).

THIS PUBLICATION IS A 'MUST-READ' for all health science librarians for several reasons. First, the report is very well organised and attractively designed. It includes a table of contents, glossary, executive summary and recommendations, a list of advisory committee members and lists of table and figures. There are five main sections covering introduction and research design, survey results, consumer health information, a review of international best practice and summary and recommendations. There is an extensive bibliography and several appendices of survey instruments and additional tables of research results. All of this in a sixty-three page booklet of less than A4 size! If that doesn't impress you, then perhaps the fact that there is also a very handy and attractive executive summary version in five pages will.

If only all research reports were this succinct and easy to read, we might find getting research into practice a lot faster. This is the kind of publication which I like passing on to senior government colleagues because I know that it will not require additional briefings in order to make its contents understandable. Not only does the executive summary help in this way but the key findings and conclusions in the main report are highlighted in separate coloured text boxes so they are easy to spot.

The first section describes the research design and instruments which I thought were entirely appropriate to the objectives but I draw your attention to comments on the project by Judy Palmer in her research column in *Health Libraries Review* 1996, 13 (1). The survey instruments are simple and straightforward and provide excellent models for health librarians interested in developing their own.

This introduction also includes a succinct review of the literature which explains the project objectives in terms of changes to the systems of health delivery and health education in Ireland, as well as new paradigms in health generally, such as evidence-based medicine and patient participation in treatment choice, and other new developments which are having an impact in information technology. This review is essential reading for all those interested in health information provision and would make a useful contribution as a separate article in the professional press.

The survey results are presented in the next chapter in a combination of ways, principally text, tables and figures. There is a logical progression of topics such as reasons for seeking information, types of information needed quickly, how the information was obtained, etc. Peppered throughout the text are comments made in the questionnaires or during the follow-up interviews. I thought these were very helpful in expanding on the problems and needs of specific groups but I must say that at times I found reading through several columns of comments, or sifting the comments from the surrounding text, a bit tiring. This is really only a minor criticism, as I am sure readers will still enjoy the personal insights contained in these pages. I found that it was interesting to learn about

the information needs of certain professionals, such as environmental health officers and dentists, as most UK studies recently have focused entirely on nurses and doctors mentioning a few only of the many professions allied to medicine.

Overall, this survey seemed to validate the findings of other surveys of health professionals' and students' information needs eg that lack of time, geographical distance from libraries, lack of relevant information resources, lack of computer equipment, lack of access to trained librarians, restrictive library hours, etc were the main barriers to accessing information. What I found very helpful was that ways of resolving some of these problems were clearly highlighted within the text.

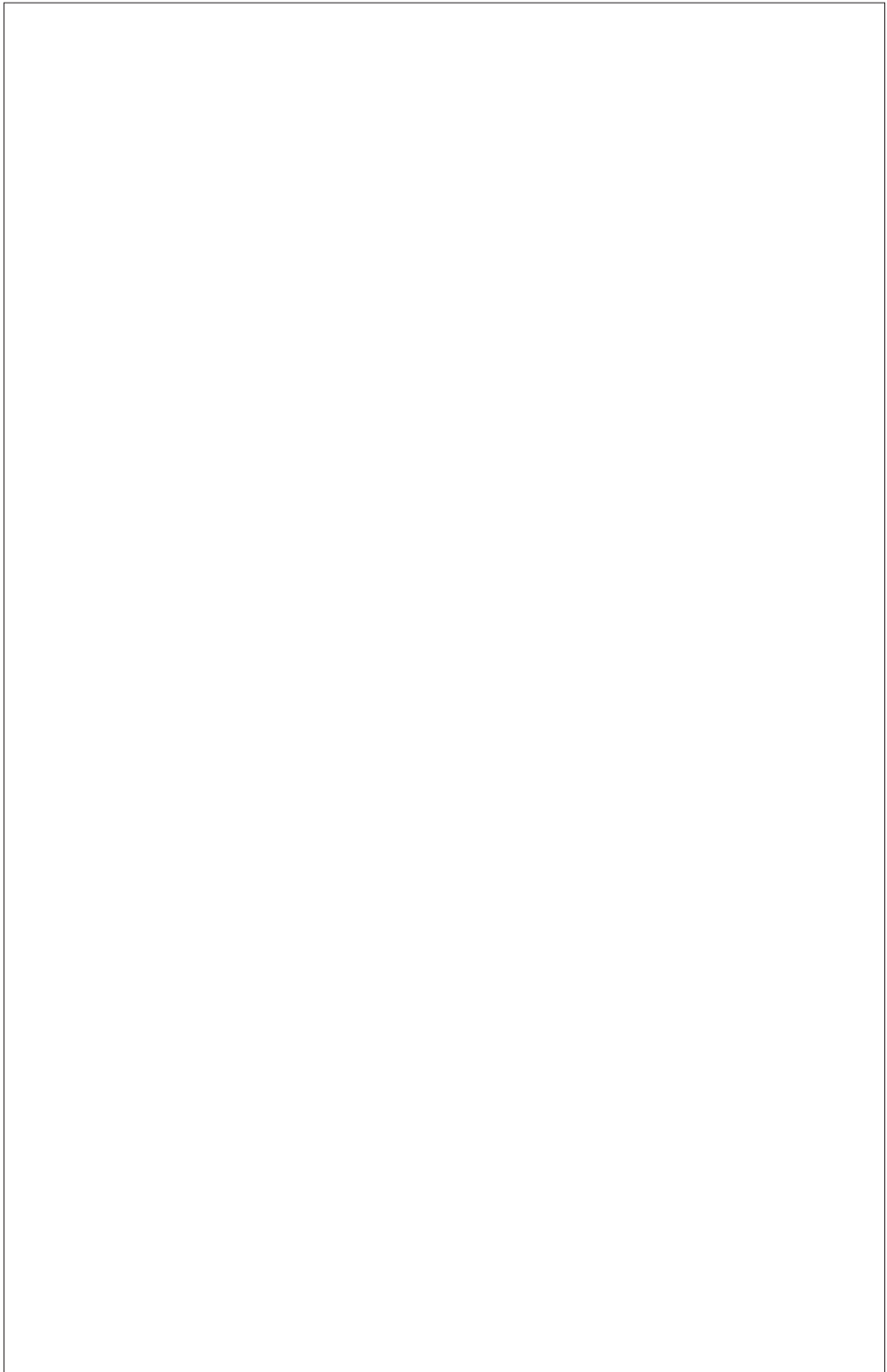
The third chapter presents the results of a separate survey on consumer health information provision. Like the other chapters, it is logically structured and includes a brief review of the context of the review, the findings and comments from health service staff on consumer health information provision, findings from librarians about the nature and level of demand for this information, as well as the types of information provided, and recommendations on ways to improve this aspect of health information delivery.

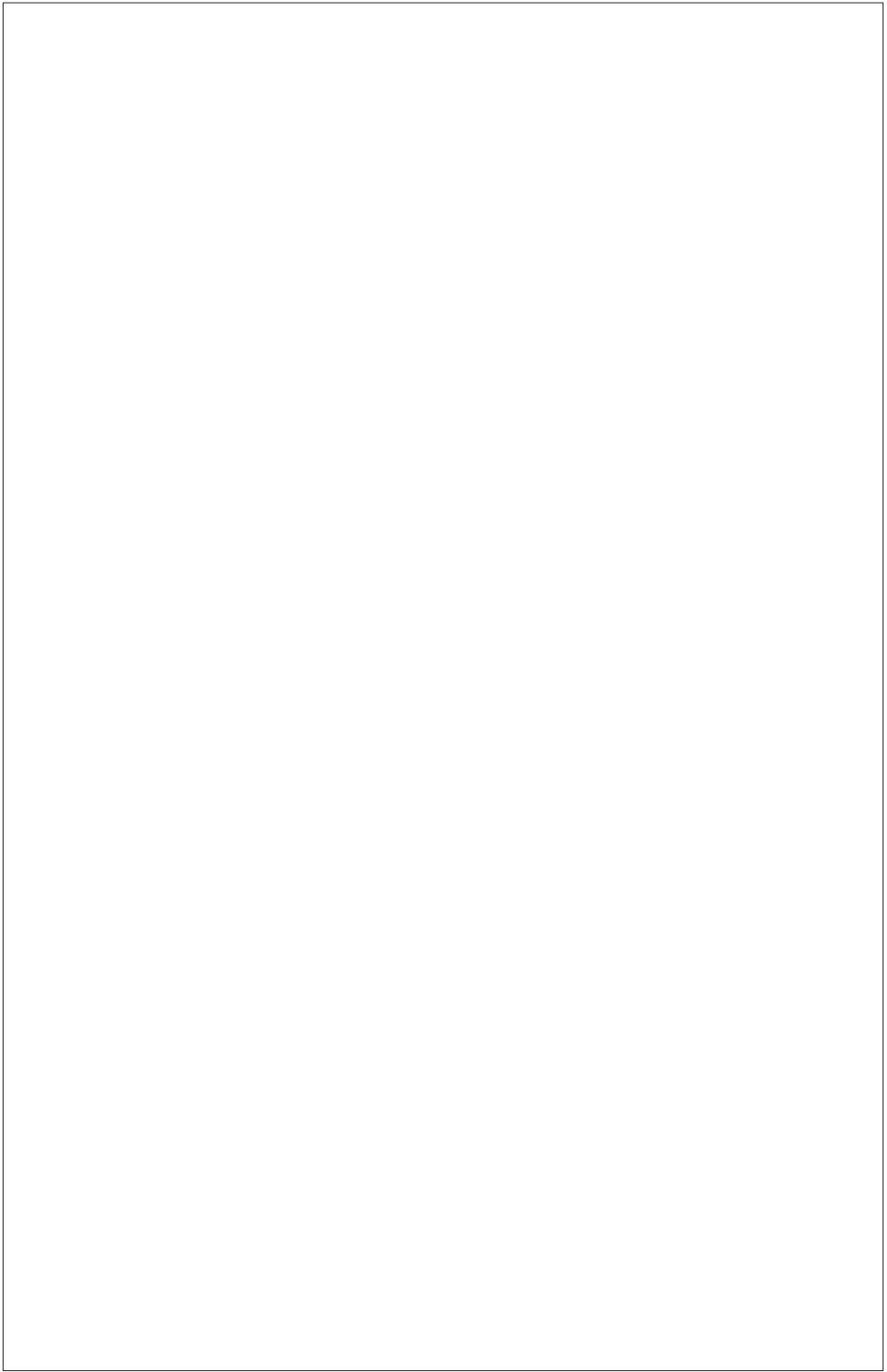
Chapter four is a review of international best practice in health information delivery and policy and chapter five is the presentation of conclusions and recommendations. Chapter four provides my second reason for describing this publication as a 'must-read'. It begins with the statement that it "provides an overview of the major developments in accessing health care information world-wide". The only word missing from this sentence is 'excellent'. Again, as with the literature review in the first chapter, this chapter deserves to be highlighted as a separate contribution to the literature. The fact that it can condense a comprehensive treatment of world-wide initiatives into only ten pages is a tribute to the author's exceptional talent for choosing the most significant and relevant models of good practice. This chapter must be put on all health information course reading lists.

My final reason for encouraging you to buy this publication is contained in the final chapter of conclusions and recommendations. There are eight main recommendations with many sub-recommendations covering all aspects of a national health information service. Whilst the first recommendation is the formation of a panel to develop a national healthcare library and information plan, I must say that I think the blueprint for this plan is included in the set of recommendations. These include a list of specific objectives for the plan; a list of initiatives to facilitate its implementation; a proposal for the establishment of a health library service in each health board and hospital, resourced to the levels required by the Standards for Irish Health Care Libraries; ideas for further investment in information technology; a proposal for a salary and grading review for health librarians, etc. If these are implemented, Ireland's health information system will soon lead international best practice in this area!

In conclusion, I highly recommend this report. I think it is a landmark document which you will read time and time again and it is a bargain at £10.

Margaret Haines, NHS Library Adviser, Department of Health, London.





ISSN 0023-9542