

# An Leabharlann

## THE IRISH LIBRARY

Second Series Volume 15 Number 3/4 2001

- \* Design History and Material Culture in Ireland
- \* Magee Collection  
in St. Mary's University College Library
- \* The Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Memorial Library  
and Archive
- \* The Deral Project
- \* News
- \* Reviews



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# Design History And Material Culture In Ireland: An Outline Of Sources and Resources

PAUL CAFFREY

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*This article contains a plea for the establishment of a design archive in Ireland and focuses on the often neglected subject of the importance of design and material culture in Ireland.*

*Although designed objects are collected by museums and private collectors, the documents relating to the design and the consumption of everyday products, advertising, design practice, business records and designers papers have not been actively collected by libraries and archives.*

*The sources and resources currently available for the study of design in Ireland are examined and the possibilities of collecting material for an archive are outlined.*

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Irish culture has been viewed as pre-eminently literary, verbal and musical. Though visual aspects of Irish culture have contributed to its definition, less emphasis has been placed on the study of visual and material history. This article seeks to indicate how this deficiency ought to be redressed, and where sources may be found which will enable scholars to investigate an area of inquiry hitherto so undeservedly neglected.

Ireland, unlike Finland or Italy, has not been regarded as a country in which design is important. Historically, there has been a lack of manufacturing industry. Few, if any, internationally-known designers were born, educated or worked in Ireland.<sup>1</sup> The lack of recognition for Irish design does not mean that it does not exist. Products produced or consumed by Irish people in the past have just as much significance as those of other more design-conscious countries. The only difference is that the Irish tradition of design has been implicit, unrecognized and undefined.

The very familiar features of everyday life such as lighting, carpets, domestic and office appliances, curtains, wallpaper, furniture, clothing, packaging, religious artifacts, souvenirs, advertising, mass-produced glass and ceramics and what is usually classified in libraries and museums as ephemera are the very focus of design history studies. Irish design history is a large subject. It includes the study of a diverse range of objects such as furniture, interiors, dress, textiles, product or industrial design, crafts, graphic design, as well as the work of individual designers. Examples of designed objects are everywhere. Therefore, ample opportunities exist for their study. The most important resource for the design historian is the development of an informed appreciation for what is usually

taken for granted in our surroundings, everyday things at home or at work or in the street.

Because of the historical relationship between design and art and architectural history, the most common misconception about design history is that it is primarily concerned with aesthetics, and collections of unusual or beautiful things. This may sometimes be the case. More often than not, the historian of design is concerned with functional, utilitarian products whose beauty may not be apparent to even the most sympathetic eye. Design history is rooted in economic and social history. It concerns itself with the production and consumption of objects which are generally mass-produced goods. Many of these products may be anonymously designed or designed by a team, so the cult of the individual creative genius is usually less important unless the designer is a design 'icon' such as Eileen Gray.

Irish design history provides significant social and economic indicators of the aspirations and standards of living in Ireland. It reveals much about the state of Irish culture at a given historical point. A twentieth-century shortlist of designs that are associated with Ireland include Guinness (packaging and advertising), whiskey, the harp as a national symbol, Waterford glass, Kerrygold, Belleek china, the Claddagh ring, Irish linen, Irish lace, tweed, handcrafted ceramics, the Aran jersey, the Aer Lingus corporate identity, Ballygowan, Riverdance and the millennium logotype. Common to all is the implicit, peculiarly Irish tradition of design, created either by advertising and marketing agencies, or by the use of traditional materials and vernacular designs with a continuous history. Each of these, either alone or in conjunction with others, conjure up a nostalgic, romantic vision of an Ireland as she might have been in the past. This imagined country is one where the national colour, green, abounds, which evokes a particular political and historical milieu in which the use of natural materials, traditional skills and crafts, and kinds of decoration inform a particular continuum of rural life.

Turning now to the sources for research into design, the principal primary research source for design history is the artefact itself. Sketches, drawings, documentation relating to the design process, models, contemporary paintings, photographs and statements, are also relevant, as are statements by the designer, critics or consumers of the product. Promotional literature, newspaper and magazine articles and advertisements often contain the first printed accounts of a product. The manufacturer, processes and materials of production, the cost and price of the object, advertising and marketing, economic and political policy, social influence and impact of a product are all themes that need to be explored in relation to a designed object.

The main problem is that there exists no public collection of mass-produced appliances and products, such as radios, vacuum cleaners and kitchen equipment, nor one showing how Irish people actually lived in the twentieth century. The advent of the third millennium is an ideal time to analyze what material objects defined the century in Ireland. Any existing and forward-looking museum could relatively easily and cheaply form a collection, were it to make a public appeal for products that defined the century for its citizens.

However, no single institution can provide the scholar with an overview of design in Ireland. It is necessary to draw on a variety of sources, most of which are concerned with pre-modern Ireland. The National Museum of Ireland at the newly converted Collins' Barracks displays its collections of mainly Irish decorative art and design with particular emphasis on silver, glass, furniture, and ceramics. The National Museum contains superb collections of dress and textiles. However, material not on display is difficult to access, due to staffing and conservation problems. The Ulster Museum, Belfast, houses various relevant collections, and these are of similar objects to those held in Dublin by the National Museum, which itself provides notable points of comparison. Those of contemporary glass, ceramics and dress are particularly important. The Ulster Museum's collections emphasize the importance of industry, technology and manufacturing to the province's design history. The Irish Linen Centre in the Lisburn Museum contains the finest specialist collection devoted to the history of the linen industry.

The Hunt Museum, Limerick, displays a representative collection of early Irish design concentrating on the Bronze Age and Medieval artifacts as well as on eighteenth and nineteenth century glass, silver and ceramics. Smaller specialist museums such as the Civic Museum, Dublin; the Cork Museum; Knock Folk Museum, Co. Mayo; Museum of Irish Ethnicity; the Labour History Museum (and Archives); the Irish Agricultural Museum at Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford; the National Maritime Museum of Ireland, Dun Laoghaire; the National Print Museum, Dublin; the Steam Museum, Lodge Park, Straffan, Co. Kildare; the Pearse Museum, St Enda's, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin; Locke's Distillery, Kilbeggan, Co. Westmeath and the Famine Museum at Strokestown Park, Co. Roscommon all house significant collections of designed objects.

For the study of interior design, country house museums such as those at Newbridge House and Malahide Castle, Co. Dublin; Strokestown, Co. Roscommon and Castletown, Co. Kildare contain historically authentic interiors and house collections of Irish furniture. Remarkably few cottages and smaller houses have been preserved as museums and there are no examples of tenement or suburban housing in Ireland that have been preserved.

A comprehensive list of archives is given by Seamus Helferty and Raymond Refaüssé.<sup>2</sup> The most important archival sources for design history are the National Archives, the National Library of Ireland, Irish Manuscripts Commission Business Records Survey (at the National Archives), National Photographic Archive (National Library of Ireland), The Patents Office, Irish Folklore Commission, the Irish Architectural Archive and the various Diocesan archives. In Northern Ireland, the Federation of Ulster Local Studies and the Monuments and Buildings Record (Department of the Environment) provide exemplary records which highlight the development of industrial and commercial history.

The records and archives of former and existing semi-state bodies are also critical. These include bodies such as the Electricity Supply Board, An Post, Eircom, Aer Lingus, Bord Fáilte, Enterprise Ireland (including Coras Trachtála), Central Statistics Office, the

Kilkenny Design Workshops and the Industrial Development Authority.

Manufacturing industry also has its own records, for example, Guinness, Waterford Crystal, Belleek, Donegal Carpets, Waterford Stanley Ranges, Carrigaline and Arklow Potteries.

Shops and retail businesses are significant sources for design historians, especially long established businesses that have retained an archive. In this category are companies such as Clery's, Brown Thomas, Weir's, Cleo, Taylor Signs, The Dublin Woollen Company, Carley's Bridge Potteries Ltd., County Wexford (established 1654) and Rathborne's. However many firms have not survived and their records have been lost.

Design organisations are valuable sources of information, such as the Institute of Designers in Ireland (formerly Society of Designers in Ireland), the European Institute for Design and Disability (incorporating the Irish Institute for Design and Disability), the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland, and the Architectural Association.

The registration of patents and designs in Ireland is a subject too large for the scope of this article, but the records of the Patents Office contain much material relevant to the history of both patents and registered designs<sup>3</sup>.

Also of importance are the papers of individual designers. Apart from some architect-designers such as Michael Scott, there are no holdings of such papers in the public domain.

The National Irish Visual Arts Library at the National College of Art and Design (N.C.A.D.) maintains a design section. It holds the Kilkenny Design Workshops archive and numerous files on craft design, craft fairs, The Crafts Council of Ireland, ceramics, design education, fashion, furniture, glass, jewellery, metalwork, textiles, weaving, tapestry, interior design, graphic design, and individual designers. These files contain newspaper and magazine cuttings. A most valuable repository is the N.C.A.D.'s holding of student undergraduate theses, which cover every conceivable aspect of design, many containing primary research in this area.

This article proposes that an Irish Design Archive be set up, an archive which would be the designated national centre for the collection of design material. Private collections of papers and related material could be given to or deposited with the archive. It would become the national centre for the study of design history and material culture.

Design history is more than the study of key designers and objects. The design of goods that most people live with and use in everyday life must be the focus of any Irish design archive. The use of oral histories as a method of collecting material would allow for the collection of views from those who worked on the design, making and manufacturing of products, and also from those who used the products and incorporated them into their daily life.

The identification and preservation of a fixed corpus of Irish design history material in a single place will encourage scholars to devise an appropriate theoretical framework for its analysis and consideration. It will enable interdisciplinary research. It will facilitate useful and significant comparisons of Irish material and Irish history with those of other



countries. It could stimulate significant studies in international and trans-national design, and indeed could ultimately provide a key to a definitive survey of European design history.

The setting up of such a facility would enable the hidden history of Irish design to be captured and documented for the future. The ability to make a careful survey of the history of design, affords the main springboard for the future of Irish design both in the national and international context.

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*Dr. Paul Caffrey is a lecturer at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. He co-ordinates the undergraduate design history courses and is a contributor to the taught MA course in design history. He has lectured and published books on Irish design history, interior architecture, miniature painting and the decorative arts.*

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1. Although Eileen Gray (1878-1976) worked almost exclusively in France, she was born near Enniscorthy, County Wexford. Gray is the only Irish-born designer to have received international recognition.
2. Helferty, Seamus and Refaussé, Raymond (eds). (1993). *Directory of Irish Archives* 2nd edition. Dublin: Irish Academic Press.
3. Clark, Robert and Smith, Shane (1997). *Intellectual Property Law in Ireland*. Dublin, Butterworths.

# Magee collection in St Mary's University College Library, Belfast

SHEILA FITZPATRICK

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*An introduction to the Magee Collection held in the library of St Mary's University College, Belfast. The collection covers Irish history, literature and education and includes many out of print and rare items. It is particularly rich in Northern Ireland local history, especially the history of Belfast, Downpatrick and East Down. Jack Magee had a special interest in the Lecale area of County Down, and among the Magee papers are hundreds of references, lecture notes, and transcripts from original sources on the history and people of the Lecale. The papers are the record of a lifetime's work in Irish history and should be a valuable resource for local historians.*

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In the summer of 1999 Mrs Mary Magee donated the books and papers of her late husband Jack Magee to the library of St Mary's University College, Belfast. He had intended his library to go to St Joseph's College but the new library in St Mary's was fortunate enough to receive the bequest as St Mary's amalgamated with St Joseph's in 1987, and both colleges located on the Falls Road site in 1995. Jack Magee was head of the History Department, St Joseph's College, Trench House from 1963-1981, and he was also a noted historian and bibliophile. When he died in 1993 the Daily Telegraph obituary said of him "It is given to very few people to change the way in which a subject is taught in schools in an entire region. When that subject is Irish history in Northern Ireland the achievement is all the more remarkable. Jack Magee was one of a small group of dedicated historians and educators who over a few decades revolutionised the teaching of Irish history in schools."

He was born in Belfast in 1914 but grew up in Clones in the turbulent period before and after Partition. An undergraduate at University College Dublin in the early Thirties – a period when the political passions of the Civil War were still high – he graduated with first class honours in history. He was an historian who had lived through events that changed radically the character of his country. He did not view the political troubles of Ireland with resignation and fatalism, but hoped for a future which would give room for difference, and for empathy.

During his teaching career, which began in St Patrick's High School, Downpatrick in 1938, he became convinced that a critical and objective approach to the teaching of Irish history in schools would make for a more balanced view of the past and perhaps change

the perceptions which led to conflict. In his address to the Conference of the Irish Association at Queen's University in 1970 he tackled the question of the teaching of Irish history in Irish schools noting that *"the view of past history which influenced the behaviour of so many Irishmen in the 19th century ... owed little to their formal schooling, but had been acquired as part of their political and religious experience"*. The national system of education established in 1831 discouraged the study of Irish history, music and literature: partly in the hope of eradicating old enmities, and partly from the fear that individual teachers might plant subversive ideas. As a result young people got their knowledge of the past of their country from folk traditions, the ballads of the countryside, and from the persuasive but often polemic writings of protagonists. Jack Magee argued that after Partition these attitudes survived. The Department of Education in the new independent Irish State emphasised the nationalist version of Irish history, while in Northern Ireland in 1970 *"the situation is not so much that Irish history has been badly taught but in very many cases it has not been taught at all."*

As a teacher of history and a teacher of teachers he set out to remedy this. He was a founder member of the Cultural Traditions Group and an early advocate of education for mutual understanding in Northern Ireland. During his time in St Joseph's College of Education he influenced many cohorts of young teachers with his ideas on the teaching of history—reliance on sources, openness to the views of others and intellectual rigour. In 1974 Routledge & Kegan Paul published his book *Northern Ireland: crisis and conflict* in their World Studies series. This series aimed to provide students of history with a range of contemporary material, selected and introduced by a scholar. Through the selection and the possible lines of inquiry suggested the student can learn *"how to read and assess historical documents. He will see how the contemporary historian works and how historical judgements are formed. He will learn to discriminate among a number of sources and to weigh the evidence."* Jack Magee was just the man for this sort of assignment. One reviewer of this book praises his reliable and incisive commentary but adds *"the ingredient most lacking however, is material from popular ballads and the underground press—Orange and Green—which would illustrate the emotional springs of hatred which perpetuate the crisis and conflict of Northern Ireland."* As his papers show he was very familiar with these ingredients, but with his distrust of bellicose nationalism, perhaps he feared the power of the emotional springs of hatred and felt that these sources already permeated the community.

His library reflects his passion for Irish history, literature and education and is a very valuable addition to the library stock. He was a regular visitor to second-hand bookshops and had a great eye for rarities and out of print material. There are over 2000 books and pamphlets in the collection, including a wide range of books on church history in Ireland, Irish monasticism, Catholic Church history and Irish education and literature. There are also many bibliographies of Irish history. It was a condition of the bequest that the books were kept together and so, while they are classified according to subject, the class mark is prefixed with H/ and they are housed together in the upper floor of the library. Interestingly, we have found that readers are attracted to browsing in the Magee

Collection and books from this collection are often picked up while duplicates elsewhere in the library go unnoticed.

Some of the books were already in the library stock, but many are passing publications, which would be hard to locate elsewhere. He collected the occasional publications of local history societies and booklets produced by enthusiastic local historians. *Placenames of Rostrevor* and *Drummaroad and Clanvaraghan* are examples of the many invaluable but ephemeral publications in the collection. The last mentioned has an account of General De Gaulle's County Down relations. The collection also includes parish histories and booklets such as *A History of the Moneyreagh Congregation* which was written to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Moneyreagh Presbyterian congregation. These publications often include family histories, photographs, maps and they are treasuries for the local historian. Most, but not all of these, relate to that part of eastern County Down, which he loved so well. Among the rarities are Edward Parkinson's *The City of Downe from its Earliest Days* and *Statistical Survey of the County of Down* by the Reverend John Dubourdieu. There is also a small collection of late nineteenth and early 20th century fiction, including some forgotten titles like *The Spearman of the North*, a romance of Red Hugh O'Donnell by Mrs M.T. Pender, or *The wild rose of Lough Gill: a tale of the Irish War in the seventeenth century* by Patrick G. Smyth. There is of course, a copy of the novel which has a special place in the folk memory of County Down people : *Betsy Grey or Hearts of Down a tale of 98* by W.G. Lyttle . Records for the books and pamphlets are now included in St Mary's online catalogue and they are also listed together in the Magee Collection sub-catalogue. Each has a special bookplate, which includes a view of Down Cathedral.

During his period as Head of the History Department at St Joseph's, Jack Magee amassed a large number of papers, which he also bequeathed to the library. They are a wonderfully interesting collection of his letters, lectures, researches, reviews and they include many transcripts of original sources. He was very generous in his help to students and other historians, both professional and amateur. Among the many historians who wrote to him was Ambrose Macaulay who was working on the Census of 1834. This follow-up of the census of 1831 was an effort by the Whig government in London to determine the religious denomination of the inhabitants of Ireland. Macaulay asked Jack to check the accuracy of the figures for County Down and also to comment on the fairness of his summary. This paper gives us some sobering insights into the Ireland of that time. There were some disputes between clergymen as to the accuracy of the returns, each claiming to have more adherents than appeared in the final figures. An explanation given for the non-listing of Episcopalians in the Donegall Street district of Belfast, was that they were the children of parents who were carried off by death in the poorhouse or fever hospital and too young to know their denomination. In some areas, such was the poverty that members of families had to go to church on alternate Sundays as they had only one set of clothes, not good clothes, just clothes. The papers are a mine of such illuminating material.

The Lecale district of County Down, that area between Strangford and Dundrum formerly bounded with marshes and rivers, was his special interest. Partly due to early Anglo-Norman occupation it has had a more stable population and more continuity of social structures than many other parts of Ulster. Relations between the different religious groups seem to have been relatively good through the centuries. John De Courcy regarded this area almost as his own principality and the Anglo-Normans have left an indelible mark on its character and topography. Towns, ports, castles, churches and monastic ruins all bear witness to the Norman influence. No systematic clearance of the native population of Lecale was attempted as the new rulers realised that the labour of ordinary people was needed to give economic stability to the settlement. The advent of the Anglo-Normans did not greatly alter the character of the local population, the role of the newcomers was more that of a small ruling ascendancy. Later, the land made available by the dissolution of the monasteries was a factor of supreme importance. The ruling families vied with each other in laying claim to the lands of the former monasteries and the prior establishment of powerful Anglo-Irish families meant that the Plantation of Ulster did not extensively affect this little corner of East Down. Among the Magee papers are hundreds of papers, lecture notes, and copies of original sources on the history and people of the Lecale. These include a set of notes, which he prepared for the Queen's University extra-mural course on the history of the Lecale. Held in Downpatrick in the winter of 1969 it was attended by nearly one hundred and fifty adults of every educational, economic and religious background.

Reading through the papers, more than anything one is struck by the interest and sympathy Jack Magee had for the ordinary people of Ireland. His papers include the transcripts of many interviews with ordinary people. He believed that Irish history books had concentrated too much on war and politics and he quotes with approval the advice given by the *Report of the Study Group on the Teaching of History in Schools* in the Republic. It said "*history teaching may better attain one of its aims if it can bring home to our young people that the ordinary people of Ireland who have worked well and honestly at their allotted tasks ... have also served Ireland in a patriotic way*". He admired Henry Glassie's book *Passing the Time* which deals with every aspect of a community in County Fermanagh, which Glassie had studied over a seven-year period. He believed that the reminiscences of ordinary people when accurately recorded and properly evaluated, would be of immense value to the historian of the future. Accordingly he was very interested in collecting the diaries and first hand accounts of the ordinary affairs of ordinary people.

There is a transcript of his conversation with Richard Parkinson who spent his boyhood in Downpatrick between 1900 and 1911. Parkinson's father was a Dickensian figure. A solicitor in the office of H. Wallace & Co. he was engaged for all his working life – 33 years – on a Chancery case. Parkinson remembers the robed judges being escorted from the train by a group of halbadiers to the Spring Assizes in Downpatrick. He also remembered relatives taking patients from the Infirmary in carts to the midsummer pilgrimage to Struell Wells. Another paper, *Memories of the Quoile*, is the reminiscence of

Tommy Fitzsimons who died at the age of 95 on the 24th August 1928. When he was a boy two coaches ran to Belfast holding about a score of people, but his mother often used to walk to Belfast from Downpatrick to see her sister, and the postman walked from Downpatrick to Belfast distributing letters. Tommy remembered a man caught stealing turkeys at the bridge being transported. There was industrial pollution of rivers even then. He remembers the river being full of salmon, trout, mullets, flukes, roach and pike, all killed later by flax water. These vivid, artless accounts convey the atmosphere of the times more than any compilation of facts and are an engrossing read.

As well as the memories of the ordinary people there is an immense amount of material on the eminent families of the Lecale, among them the Nelsons or Neilsons, the Russells and the Trotters. Charles Russell, later Baron Russell of Killowen became Attorney – General in 1886 and again in 1892. Another Russell was a Catholic bishop. The Reverend Moses Neilson was an attractive character who is mentioned many times in the papers. A member of a Presbyterian family of Gaelic scholars and educators he graduated MA from Glasgow University in 1763 and was ordained for the Congregation of Kilmore in 1767. Originally Moses Nelson he changed his name to Neilson after he had traced his ancestry from Niall of the Nine Hostages. In contrast, his wife claimed direct descent from John Knox. Shortly after coming to his meetinghouse in the townland of Rademon he opened an academy in the manse which became noted for quality of tuition and liberality.

He prepared many young men for the Catholic priesthood by teaching them Latin, Greek, French and many other subjects. Some of them resided in the manse. Among them was Luke Walsh, from Lisburn, who was ordained by Bishop McMullan in 1813. Years later, Fr Walsh said of his tutor “*I was educated by a Presbyterian clergyman, a man of as great moral worth and sterling integrity as Ireland could boast of. . . . well known as one of the first classical scholars of his day. I was for seven years under his parental care and tuition; and even yet I cling to his memory with filial love and affection*”. Only one of Moses’ seven sons – William the Gaelic scholar – retained the Neilson name. The family continued to be prominent in the annals of Down producing many colourful characters including Joseph “Garibaldi” Nelson who dropped out of his medical studies to fight with Garibaldi for Italian independence. Independence achieved, he finished his medical studies in Belfast and spent another 14 years as a surgeon on a tea plantation in India. Later he studied eye surgery in Vienna and finally became a renowned eye specialist in Belfast.

Among the many transcripts of original sources, which Jack Magee found in his researches in archives, are excerpts from the journals of Thomas Russell who was later hanged at Downpatrick for his part in the 1798 Rebellion. The diaries provide a poignant insight into the personality and views of a sensitive young man and into the social life of Belfast at the time. He was a romantic young man who struggled with his attachment to a lady referred to as E who unfortunately had relinquished all thoughts of him for prudential reasons. Neither had any fortune but Russell thought “*it possible that I could conceal and in time overcome my present attachment*” as he thought it might be possible that he might get a certain lady with a large fortune which would relieve him of the miseries of



poverty. Later entries show that he had not been very successful in forgetting E. He was continually meeting her in the street and at the various social gatherings of the Belfast upper classes of the day. Events were to overtake all his plans.

These extracts convey some of the interest and liveliness of the papers but there is also much scholarship. The sources are meticulously recorded and there is an index containing many hundreds of subject headings with lists of relevant sources including many primary sources. The papers are accessible but they need to be organised and catalogued. When this is done they will provide a rare and valuable record of some of the sources of Ulster history and of the history of the Lecale in particular.

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*Sheila Fitzpatrick was College Librarian in St Mary's University College from 1971 until  
September 2001*

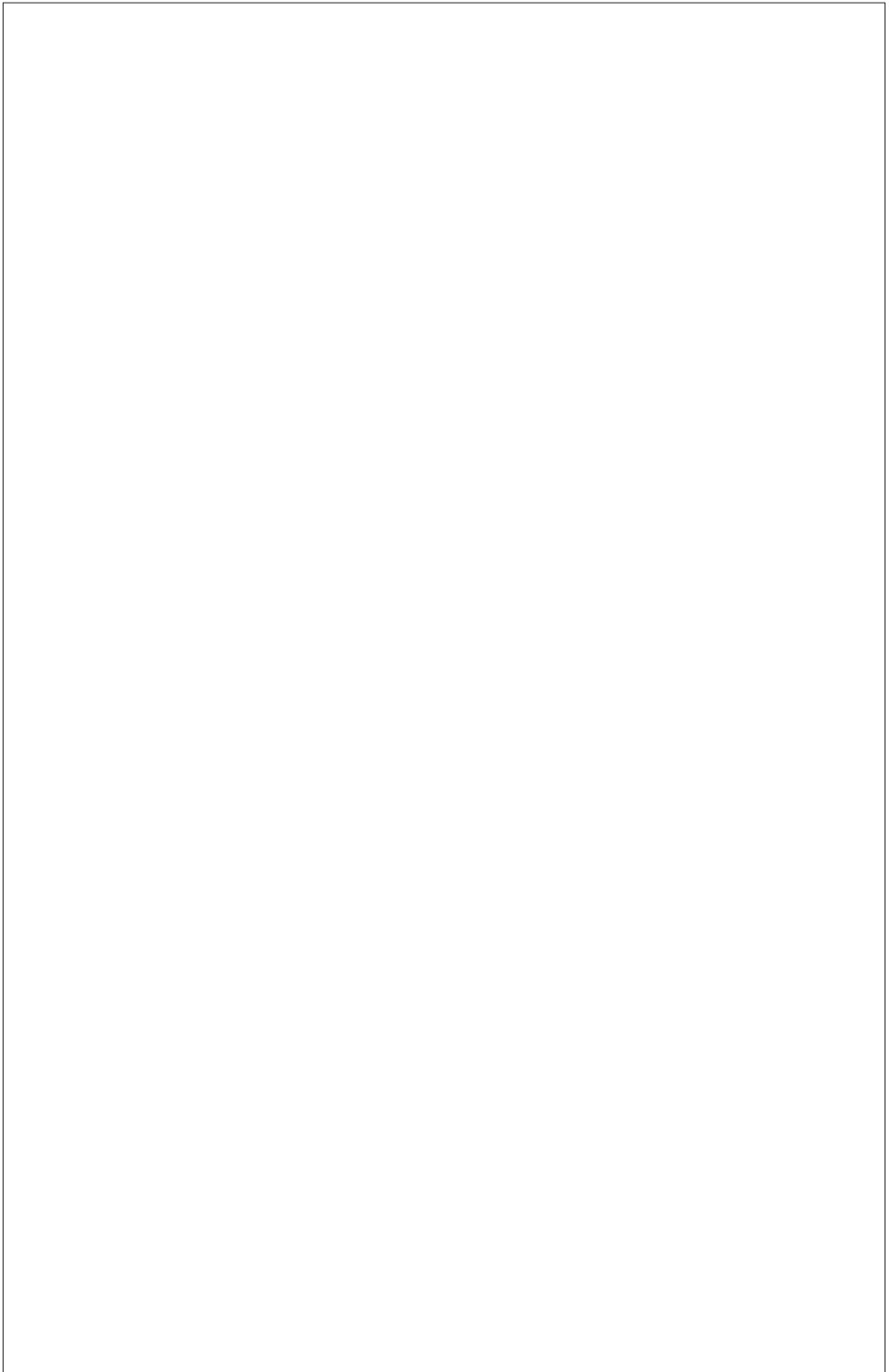
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- Neilson/Nelson papers
- Parkinson, Richard. [Memories of Downpatrick]





# The Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive

CRÓNÁN Ó DOIBHLIN

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*The Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive is a unique cultural and historical resource located in the ecclesiastical capital of Ireland, Armagh. It was officially opened in May 1999 and a full-time Librarian has been in position since February 2000. The Library is a free, independent public reference library, which houses important collections relating to Irish history, the Irish language, ecclesiastical history, the Irish abroad and Irish games.*

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After the unexpected death of the Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich (1923-1990), it was discovered that he had left instructions in his will that his academic papers, books, and a number of other personal items be passed to the local Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, of which he had been an active member since its foundation in 1954, and editor until his elevation to Armagh in 1977. A number of members of *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, friends and colleagues of the Cardinal, and representatives of the Armagh Diocese saw this as an opportunity to found a library where these materials, the result of a life's work and interest in Irish history and culture, could be made available to academic researchers and the general public. As a young priest, Tomás Ó Fiaich had a distinguished career as an academic, being awarded the Licentiate in Historical Science with the highest distinction from the University of Louvain, and being appointed later to the position of Professor of Modern Irish History in Maynooth at the relatively youthful age of 36. His early scholastic successes were no doubt driven by academic ambition. However, it is quite clear that Ó Fiaich quickly identified the importance of making history more accessible to ordinary people.

Throughout his life, Tomás Ó Fiaich spent a great deal of time and energy making his knowledge of history and Irish culture available to the general public through addresses, lectures, and publications. His publications, both in Irish or in English, are written in a clear and simple language which continues to attract a wide readership today. Even materials published under his editorship in *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, maintain a careful balance between academic and local interest through the judicious selection of topics and contributors. In addition, Ó Fiaich had also gathered together the researches of earlier pioneers in local history such as Lorcán Ó Muirí and Eamon Ó Doibhlin. There is no doubt that he saw the importance of ensuring that this work and his own significant contribution should not be lost to subsequent generations.

In 1998, after a seven year fundraising campaign within the Armagh Diocese, and with the assistance of a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery fund, the library building which now houses these collections was finally completed, almost 9 years after the Cardinal's death.

### **Aims of the Library**

It is the objective of the Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive to develop and promote the specialist cultural and academic interests favoured by the late Cardinal Ó Fiaich. To that end, the Library and Archive concentrates on collecting materials relating to the Irish language, Irish literature, Irish history with particular emphasis on local and ecclesiastical history, Irish diaspora (particularly of Europe and North America), and Irish games. The Ó Fiaich Library will strive to promote study and research in these spheres of cultural and historical interest, and the continuing development of the Library and Archive collections will reflect these aims.

### **The Library and Archive Collection**

The Library and Archive holdings are divided for the purpose of storage and administration into two distinct sections, the Print collection and the Archive collection. Cardinal Ó Fiaich's papers and books form the nucleus of both these collections, with substantial additions from the Archdiocese of Armagh, and other donors who have identified with the interests of the late Cardinal and the promotion of his ideas.

The Print Collection consists of approximately 20,000 books including many volumes relating to early Irish history, the Irish language and local history. In addition, there are over 450 periodical titles. Many of these periodical titles relate to the Irish language or to ecclesiastical history in Ireland and are generally difficult to access outside the major academic libraries. The Library also houses a substantial collection of religious pamphlets and ephemera. Since the opening of the Library, the small library staff of both voluntary and full-time employees, have been concentrating primarily on cataloguing the print collection and a completed computerised catalogue is now available in the Library Reading Rooms. This catalogue is also available through branch libraries in the Southern, Western and South Eastern Education and Library Boards.

The Ó Fiaich Archive consists of three major collections, the Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich collection, the Archive of the Archdiocese of Armagh, and the Michelene Kerney Walsh collection. The Cardinal Ó Fiaich collection consists of the late Primate's personal and academic papers, including unpublished lectures and articles, his research work in Irish history, Irish ecclesiastical links overseas, and materials relating to his lifelong promotion of the Irish language, as well as other memorabilia relating to his life as priest and professor, as Archbishop and Cardinal. The Cardinal's episcopal papers are however subject to a 30 year privacy rule and will not be released until 2020.

Probably the most important collection held by the Cardinal Ó Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive is the Archive of the Archdiocese of Armagh. This is a collection of national significance with many unique items including the records of previous Archbishops and Cardinals, continuing from the period of Archbishop O'Reilly in 1787 until the death of Cardinal D'Alton in 1963. This collection was previously housed in Ara Coeli, the Archbishop's residence in Armagh, where facilities were understandably unsuited for research purposes. The Cardinal Ó Fiaich Library and Archive now provides a more accessible and secure location for these materials.

As many readers will be aware, there are particular problems for the researcher in relation to Catholic Church records. In a paper given to Cumann Seanchais Ard Mhacha in 1990, David Sheehy, the Dublin Diocesan Archivist, describes the paucity of materials available from the period 1500-1800 in the wake of the Reformation, and the turbulent upheavals of the Cromwellian and Williamite eras. The Catholic hierarchy and clergy quite simply did not keep any records for fear of possible incrimination. The Catholic Episcopal organisation suffered severe disruption in Ireland and bishops were often cut off from their diocese. In 1713 "*Edmund Byrne Archbishop of Dublin was ordered by the Lords Justice & Council to be apprehended and committed in jail and his papers to be sealed up and sent to the Council Officers.*" A subsequent search of the O'Byrne family home failed to turn up any sign of either the Archbishop or his papers. [Sheehy 1991: 114].

Towards the end of the 18th century some records do materialise. A notable example in the Archdiocese collection is the Conwell letters, correspondence from Archbishop O'Reilly to his Vicar General, Henry Conwell, 1793-1819, which give an interesting insight into the state of the Armagh Diocese in turbulent times. It would seem that these letters, amongst the earliest documents in the Archdiocese collection, survived due to both Conwell family practice of preserving correspondence, and the fact that Henry Conwell was appointed Bishop of Philadelphia in 1819. Henry took the letters to the United States with him, and these documents were later returned to the Diocese early this century. Other collections from Conwell family members are to be found in the Library at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, and in a private collection.

Parish records also began to be kept during this period, although the practice was confined to urban rather than rural areas. Despite a relaxation in the implementation of penal legislation, a number of other factors continued to effect the survival of Catholic diocesan and parish records. As a result of the experiences of previous centuries, the Catholic Church in Ireland had not yet developed a formal archival tradition. Catholic records have also, like many other sources, suffered from natural disasters, fire, flood, or may have passed into lay hands where they were later lost. The papers of Dr. Curtis, Archbishop of Armagh in 1841, for example, were found scattered around a hayloft in premises belonging to a grocer in Drogheda. They were rescued by William John Fitzpatrick, author of *The life and times of Bishop Doyle*, but their whereabouts today are unknown. In 1850 Dr Paul Cullen arrived at Drogheda as successor to Dr George Crolly, Archbishop of Armagh, and noted that there was "*not a scrap of paper in the Archives, not*

*even to tell the names of the priests.*” [Sheehy 1991 : 115]

A further reason for the loss of documentation was the absence of a permanent residence for the Archbishop at this time. Dr Cullen in particular took steps, which provided the basis of the collection extant today, developing plans for a permanent episcopal residence with a strong room, library facilities and an archive. Despite this there remained a residual reluctance among some clergy to preserve records, and much valuable material has been lost, even in the quite recent past.

The current Archdiocese Archive collection includes private office papers, papers relating to bishops and clergy, government departments, educational bodies and to parishes. The papers of successive Archbishops and Cardinals vary in significance relative to their participation in the social and political controversies of their eras. Nevertheless they all provide a complementary perspective to events in Ireland, as perceived by one of the most powerful institutions, the Catholic Church.

Although the Ó Fiaich Library and Archive holds master copies of parish records from the Diocese, the Library does not provide a genealogical service. This function is carried out by Armagh Ancestry in Armagh, by the Irish World Citizen Organisation in Tyrone, and by Louth Public Library in County Louth. The Archdiocese collection has not been catalogued as yet. However, a series of calendars provide satisfactory access at present, and there are plans to computerise these in the near future.

The third major Archive collection is the Micheline Kerney Walsh collection which includes the Overseas Archive, previously housed in the Department of Archives at University College, Dublin, and the private papers of Micheline Kerney Walsh, the former Overseas Archivist for U.C.D, which have been recently donated by her family. This collection contains research materials gleaned primarily from Spanish and French Archives, relating to the Irish diaspora of 17th and 18th century Europe. The Ó Fiaich Library has embarked on a partnership with University College Dublin which will ensure that this collection is further developed and will continue to be available for research purposes.

Tomás Ó Fiaich had a lifelong interest in and love of the Irish Language, particularly the traditions associated with his native South Ulster. Although books were printed in Ireland from the 16th century, a manuscript tradition continued in Gaelic speaking Ireland until the mid-nineteenth century. In reality, printed books during this period were directed at a very small, privileged upper and middle class. A large number of 18th and 19th century Gaelic manuscripts derive from border territory of Counties Louth, Monaghan, Meath and Armagh. Tomás Ó Fiaich was very conscious the importance of this tradition, and edited from manuscript the poems of Art Mac Cumhaigh, and Art Bennett, making the local Gaelic traditions of South Ulster accessible again to a wider audience. The Ó Fiaich Library has a small collection of Irish manuscripts. The Library plans to develop this collection and to provide supplementary research facilities in the near future. The Library also currently offers a full Irish language service to its readers.

## Donations

The Ó Fiaich Library and Archive is continuing to collect materials that relate to the interests and specialities of the late Cardinal. The Library has archival storage facilities of the highest standard, and donations are gratefully accepted, particularly collections relating to the Irish language, ecclesiastical history or the Irish abroad.

## Facilities

The Library Reading Room offers spacious seating for up to twenty researchers, and additional readers can be accommodated in the adjacent meeting room if necessary. The Ó Fiaich Library is the location for an extensive programme of events, conferences, seminars, exhibitions and public occasions in which the entire broad experience of our local culture is celebrated. The Library also produces a quarterly newsletter entitled *Fios*. Photocopying and reprographic facilities are also available to readers.

## Location

The Library building is located on Cathedral Hill, to the rear of the Roman Catholic Cathedral. It is an impressively distinctive structure, designed by Belfast architects, P. & B. Gregory, with a sympathetic appreciation of the ecclesiastical tradition of its collection and location, and yet, is strikingly modern in appearance. The most convenient access route to the Library is via the A29 Moy/Dungannon Road. The Library welcomes readers and visitors alike. Current public opening hours are Mon. – Fri. 9.30am – 1pm & 2 pm – 5 pm.

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# The DERAL Project

MARY SHAPCOTT AND ADRIAN MOORE

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*DERAL (Distance Education in Rural Areas via Libraries) assessed the role of public librarians in the delivery of distance learning via the Internet. The five partners, from Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Austria and Spain developed guidelines for public librarians and a Web-based inventory of Internet resources for use in lifelong learning.*

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## Introduction

DERAL, (Distance Education in Rural Areas via Libraries), was a project funded by the European Union that ran between 1998 and 2000. DERAL assessed the role of public librarians in promoting distance learning via the Internet. The University of Ulster, Dublin City Libraries, and the Library Service of the North East Education and Library Board (NEELB) from Northern Ireland all contributed to DERAL as well as partners from Sweden, Austria and Spain.

DERAL was carried out in a time when governments in Europe were seeking to promote lifelong learning. This is education in which adults continue to learn, often via unconventional routes. Increasingly, governments see universal lifelong learning as a way of enabling everyone to contribute to a society in which increasing levels of competence are required – both in traditional skills such as numeracy and literacy and also in the new areas of information and communications technology. In particular, the U.K. government, concerned by the high proportion of the population lacking such skills, has initiated an educational programme aimed at non-traditional learners. Libraries are seen as natural places for such learning to be carried out.

The DERAL project investigated the potential role for public librarians in making the local library a friendly place for lifelong learners to continue their education. In particular, DERAL aimed to help public librarians to introduce their users to the distance learning resources that have appearing in huge numbers on the World Wide Web. We developed an on-line catalogue of Web-based resources and produced guidelines for librarians.

In this article we describe the background to DERAL, the work carried out, and examine the results of the project.

## Lifelong Learning, Distance Learning and Public Libraries

Governments around Europe have recently become aware that many people with low educational attainments are finding it more difficult to find work. As regards the United Kingdom, 17% of people are quoted as having difficulties with reading, writing/spelling and/or numeracy (Older and Younger, 1995). Such people are much less likely to be



employed full-time than those with average or good skills (City University, 1997). Even people with good qualifications may find their jobs becoming obsolete and need to update their education throughout their lives. Recently the British Government has created a 'University for Industry' which is "dedicated to creating a culture of lifelong learning throughout the working community" (University for Industry, 1999).

Lifelong learning is often linked with *distance learning*, in which the educator and the learner are separated in time and space. Traditionally, distance education has been used for education in rural areas where students have lived a long distance from their nearest educational establishments. More recently, time separation has become important and distance learning has expanded to include adults who need to fit their study outside normal working hours. In the past, distance learning courses were delivered using study packs comprised mostly of printed material. The learner studies the material and sits examinations at the end of the course. Usually there is some personal tutoring, even if this is only in marking assignments and providing feedback. Although distance learning is widespread, it does have disadvantages. Studies of distance learners in higher education indicate that they have higher dropout rates than students of campus-based courses (Cookson, 1990). This is partly explained by the lower educational attainments of the students starting the courses but the students often cite the teaching/learning methods as a reason for non-completion. Distance learners in higher education tend to be older, are often female and there is some evidence that distance education appeals to students from disadvantaged social groups (Thompson, 1998).

### Libraries, Learning and the Internet

The Internet provides many opportunities for improving distance learning. The most obvious facility it gives educators is the possibility of placing materials on the Web for students to read or download. More useful are specially developed multimedia materials which hold the student's attention and allow for interactivity. These tend to be expensive to develop but are potentially suitable for large-scale operations where a large number of students use the material.

Various course support systems are now widespread. These systems usually include facilities for on-line discussion groups, on-line tests and examinations and administration facilities such as enrolments, timetables, and coursework submission and return (Cravener, 1998). Examples include the Harvard Business School on-line learning environment (MacColl, 1999) and the British Open University (<http://www.open.ac.uk>).

Some authors argue that that the technology is immature. Bork and Britton (1998) discovered that few of the courses that they found in a Web search were truly interactive. More worryingly a recent American study found that the new technologies were potentially excluding poor students "who do not have access to the Internet or who have been inadequately trained" (Gladieux and Swail, 1999).

Libraries have always provided opportunities for study and it has been recognised that they can also give access to the latest educational technology. Many libraries in the U.K. and in Sweden for example have been equipped with open learning centres with computers and learning packs.

### **DERAL Project Partners**

DERAL was part of the European Union's Framework 4 research programme. There were five partners – four from the public library sector and the University of Ulster which worked in partnership with the North-East Education and Library Board in Northern Ireland. Dublin City Libraries were interested in the DERAL project from the point of view of extending its existing Internet and educational provision. Kalmar Läns Bibliotek, the library service for the Kalmar region of Sweden, coordinated the project. Büchereiverband Österreichs, the Austrian partner and the umbrella association of Austrian public and school libraries with more than 2600 libraries as members, wanted to investigate online services to its members and education in Internet technology. The Municipality of Huesca, a small town in Eastern Spain wished to promote digital services for its citizens.

### **The Pilot Sites**

Public librarians and library users participated as pilot sites for DERAL from an early stage.

The rural area of Kalmar County in the south-east of Sweden is known for having some of the lowest educational levels in Sweden. There were eleven pilot sites in Kalmar, mostly small branch libraries, but also some city libraries. The libraries in Sweden were well equipped with computers and already had Internet connections. In Austria, the four pilot sites were from the region around Vienna. None had Internet technology at the start. Four public libraries from Huesca took part. Only one of them had a public Internet connection before the project started.

The University of Ulster worked with the NEELB. Two branch libraries acted as pilot sites: in the country town of Ballymoney and in Ballee, a housing estate, on the outskirts of the town of Ballymena in County Antrim. The library in Ballee already housed an open learning centre, the Oasis Centre, which ran in conjunction with Ballymena's college of further education. It contained several multimedia computers.

There were two pilot sites in Dublin. The Central Library in Dublin had had a lot of experience with adult learners and provided both independent learning facilities and Internet facilities. The Ballyfermot Public Library, in a working class suburb of Dublin already had a set of Internet-enabled computers which were widely used by the public. Both sites were keen to expand their educational role.



## Users and Their Needs

We used a questionnaire which asked users for their gender and age and whether or not they were already a library user (in practice the existence of DERAL encouraged extra people to use their local libraries) and why they wanted to use the Internet – whether for study, learning a skill, as a hobby or simply browsing. Users were also asked to nominate three subject areas of interest. The questionnaire included a list of possible subject areas such as computing, numeracy, languages, jobs, and study skills, so that respondents would know what sort of subjects might be on offer.

The group of Swedish respondents was most interested in computer skills, wanting to use the library to acquire these before going on to other topics. There were three main groups of users: retired people who wanted to learn computing in order to be able to follow their grandchildren, unemployed people who wanted to learn how to surf the internet, and “real” distance students who were studying at a university but preferred to do it from home and wanted the calm atmosphere at the library.

The survey on Austrian library users undertaken by the pilot sites showed a great need for acquiring basic computer skills. As a lot of the questionnaires were submitted from people under the age of 20, the interest in study aids for completing formal education was also very high. Library users of 20+ were keen on improving language skills.

In Huesca more people wished to follow distance courses for personal development and in order to improve their job prospects. Not many were unemployed. Greatest interest was in computers and the Internet, basic skills, and languages, and also in agriculture, astronomy and cattle raising. Problems for users were: the space in the library, opening hours of the library and costs.

In Northern Ireland there were two groups of users – people who were already attending the Oasis Open Learning Centre in Ballee and the users from ‘off-the-street’ in Ballymoney. The Oasis group were somewhat more interested in following a specific course of study whereas the other group tended to understand the word ‘study’ to refer to be the self-guided use of materials on specific areas of interest. The subjects of most interest were roughly the same for the two groups, with computer awareness, Internet and e-mail figuring highly as well as basic skills such as mathematics and reading and writing skills. Job finding, study skills and health were also mentioned. We suspect that a larger group of users would have come up with an even more diverse set of interests – manufacturers of wooden floors, and spinal biomechanics were included in respondents’ interests.

Users in Ballee and Ballymoney in Northern Ireland were keen to use the Web as a reference library and to spend time simply browsing. People were not very interested in following a specific course of study over the Internet. Rather they wanted to use the computers in the library to supplement an existing programme (such as a attendance in the Oasis Centre – the open learning centre in Ballee) or to pick up enough information to be able to carry out a specific activity (such as navigating the Internet or setting up a Web page). Few of them were prepared to pay the serious money that many of the courses on the Web seem to require, but were keen on using the Internet for study and for learning.

## Course inventory

The incredible but unregulated growth of the World Wide Web has meant that there is a lot of useful educational material available which is difficult to find. An important deliverable from the DERAL Project was to be a Web-based inventory of useful resources and courses.

Using the conventional search engines on the Web it is difficult to find good courses and resources on topics of interest and at the level required. The purpose of the DERAL inventory was to bring some of these resources together into a manageable and easy to use gateway. We selected the most popular types of course as requested by the user survey and categorised them into broad subject areas. This allows users to focus on courses and resources in the areas they are interested in.

As already mentioned, people in our test areas were generally often areas of high unemployment and therefore most could not afford to pay for courses. As a result we concentrated on looking for free courses.

We found that there is much more material aimed at universities and schools rather than adults and that it is difficult to find good courses and resources that are free. Also we have discovered that there is an American bias in the material found. We continued to add material for the lifetime of the project. We also recognised that links disappear and we continued to monitor the existing links in the inventory. Austrian library sites encountered problems with the English language. Most users preferred resources in German, but relatively few sites were found.

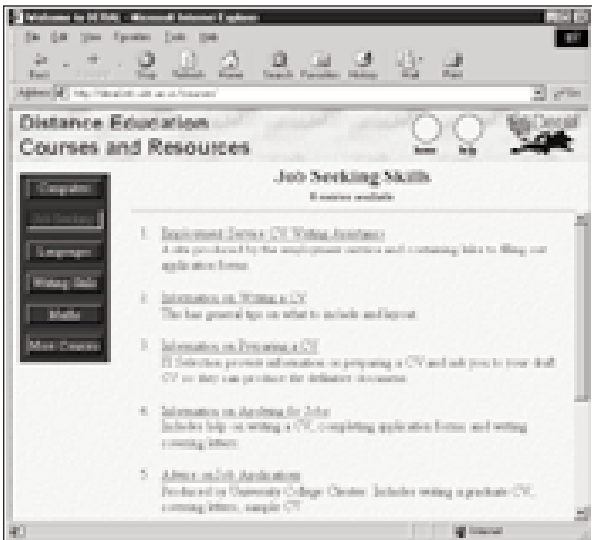
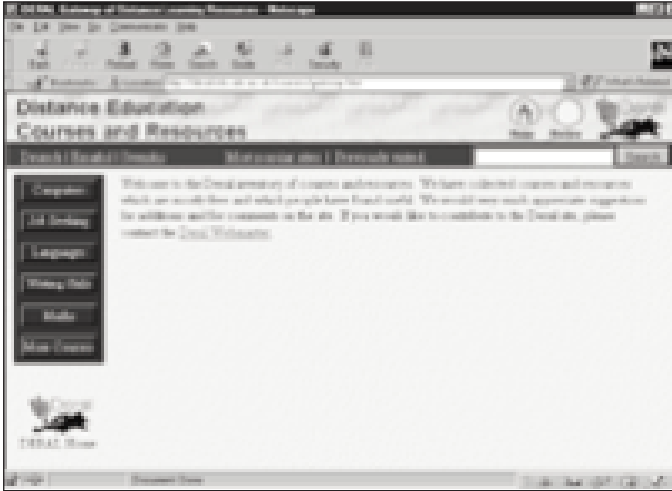
## Gateway

The DERAL Gateway is the computer system that manages the resource collection. The collection is sourced and managed via a private interface, and accessed by visitors to the system via a public interface. Users are invited to contribute to the collection by submitting reviews and ratings of resources they have used, or by suggesting new resources for inclusion in the collection.

## Gateway Architecture

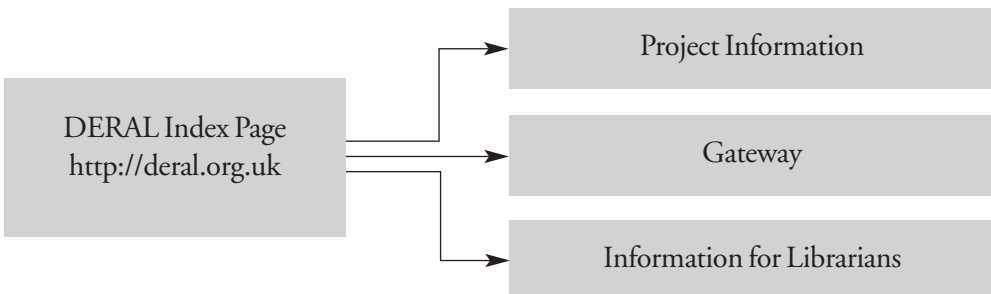
The heart of the Gateway is a relational database of on-line learning resources. It generates Web pages dynamically, in English, German, Spanish and Swedish (reflecting the languages of the DERAL partners). Users can choose an area of interest (in English, Computing, Job Seeking, Languages, Writing Skills, Numeracy, and Other Miscellaneous Resources). As well as selecting resources, users can change language, view sites that they have recently visited, view the most popular resources and search on title and description. They are also invited to contribute a review and rating of all resources they have visited.

The Gateway is illustrated below.



### DERAL Web Site Plan

The Gateway is one of three components of the DERAL Web Presence, the others being the Project Information Web Site and a Web resource for Librarians.



## Guidelines for Librarians

Librarians are generally happier with the role of helping users find information than of education. For example Garrod and Sidgreaves (1998) write:

*“Some computing staff described library staff as clinging to outmoded notions of professionalism and as being overzealous in helping students who needed to become more independent as learners.”*

Bamber (1995) argues:

*“As a group, adult independent learners are well established as library users. What is far less established is either the growing importance of this group of library users, or an understanding of the ways in which libraries and library staff can help to satisfy the very diverse needs experienced by individuals who fall into this category.”*

In the DERAL project we identified five major roles, based on information found in the research literature concerning distance learning and adult learners in libraries as well as from discussions with the Swedish librarians. These were: Facilities Provider, Honest Broker, Information Provider, Educator, and Marketer.

### 1. *Facilities Provider*

The Leuven Communique, states:

*“Public libraries provide, through their widespread distribution across Europe, a cost-effective infrastructure for lifelong learning and easy access to the content of the virtual networks.”* (PubliCA: the Concerted Action for Public Libraries, August 1998).

Here the library is a location from which to work. The librarian needs to be able to help with simple troubleshooting with hardware and software failures. Librarians also need to be able to help users find their way around the local software settings which may differ from standard ones. In DERAL we found that the main problems with this role for librarians were lack of training and pressures of time. Many of the problems encountered were quite challenging, and time-consuming, taking librarians away from other tasks within the library.

### 2. *Honest Broker*

Because the librarian is a trustworthy person who can deal both with the providers of distance learning and with members of the public he or she can act as an honest broker.

For example, a librarian can take an active role in the administration of distance learning courses. This can be particularly useful in the administration of on-line tests. The library can be an accredited test centre and the librarian can verify that the person taking the test is indeed the person that they say that they are. Both the ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) and the MOUS (Microsoft Office User Specialist) accreditation authorities allow for testing to take place in accredited test centres which can be public libraries.

### 3. *Information Provider*

This is perhaps the most comfortable role for librarians. The librarians in the pilot sites particularly enjoyed keeping their own lists of Web resources, appropriate to their own

localities and user needs, often by bookmarking them. They quickly became adept at using search engines such as Yahoo.

#### 4. *Educator*

As we have already remarked, educational research has demonstrated the importance of the personal relationship between teacher and student. The librarian can provide an element of humanity that is often missing from distance learning courses. In taking on the role of educator, a person is taking some of the responsibility for the student's course of study, for maintaining their self-confidence and motivation, as well as guiding them in their programme of work.

However this role can be quite daunting, particularly without training, and many librarians felt quite intimidated by it. The librarians at the pilot sites did not see themselves as educators but acknowledged that in certain circumstances they might need to help distance learners in the process of education.

Dublin City Libraries carried out work with University College Dublin which has been offering adult education courses for 50 years. The courses vary from a wide variety of interest courses to those offering certification and credits. Online courses have been offered as part of the Adult Education programme over the past 2 – 3 years to people interested in pursuing lifelong learning online. The DeLLTTi programme (Delivering LifeLong Learning Through Telematics) provides a flexible user-friendly learning environment with the option to take courses from the home, community centre or the public library – wherever a connection to the Internet is available. There was an evaluation of two courses which were provided for free. Further information about the DeLLTTi programme can be found at [www.ucd.ie/delltti](http://www.ucd.ie/delltti).

#### 5. *Marketer*

Marketing distance education courses from a library is a role with which most public librarians were unfamiliar. In some countries (e.g. in Sweden and Austria) marketing has for many years been something that is 'commercial' and not an issue with which public libraries should deal. Slowly though, more and more library staff have come to realise that this is a very important role.

### Results

Initially it had been thought that members of the public would come into the library to study complete courses on-line. In practice it was found that by far the greatest interest was in using the Internet to *help* in learning.

On the whole people did not want to pay for material that they might expect to find free in the library, but they did like the idea of using free web sites that helped them to carry out specific tasks, such as learning how use a computer or brushing up their skills with a foreign language. There was great enthusiasm for the concept of learning over the Internet, but some disappointment with the lack of suitable courses, especially in Sweden,

Spain and Austria. People wanted material in their own languages and in courses suited to the conditions in their own countries. In Austria for instance, users did want not German courses, but *Austrian* courses. Similarly, the large number of U.S. courses was not really attractive to the Spanish users.

In Ireland, the universal availability of free Internet access throughout the library network has raised the possibility that Irish libraries will play a greater role in supporting on-line distance learning in the future. The Irish Government's White Paper on Adult Education (*Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education*, 2000) has recognised the important role that libraries have and will continue to play in supporting the education system.

Dublin City Libraries found that the experience of working with University College Dublin on the DeLLT*T*i on-line courses reinforced the value to both participating organisations of forging stronger links between libraries and online education providers. Additionally the feedback from course participants also pointed to the need for more practical support within the library.

Staff training proved to be very important. Library staff needed training, in several areas. They needed to learn how to operate computer systems well enough to be able to get library users started – effectively having to introduce novice users to new concepts. When problems arose, the staff needed to be able to troubleshoot quite complex problems. These tasks were quite often additional to the librarian's traditional duties and could be quite burdensome.

Dublin City Libraries have implemented a comprehensive Internet training programme for all staff. In recognition that there is a need for training and support among library users and students as well as staff, an Internet Residency Programme was introduced at branch level commencing March 2001.

The inventory on the web site has a relatively small number of resources: there still being a lack of really good free material on the Web. The authors would be most appreciative of any suggestions on how to develop the site (<http://deral.org.uk>). There is a clear contrast between the availability of free resources in a library and the lack of such resources on the Web.

The effectiveness of the project depended heavily on the relationship between the library service and local government. Where the relationship was good, as with the NEELB, in Dublin and in Sweden the project was supported well. But where the library service was remote from government, as in Spain, and to a lesser extent in Austria, the politicians appeared to be indifferent to lifelong learning and distance education. There is clearly a mismatch between the aspirations expressed by governments operating at the European level and the reality as experienced by public librarians and users.

## Acknowledgements

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# Interview with Helen Osborn

## Head of Libraries and Information Western Education and Library Board



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*Helen Osborn has been Head of Libraries and Information at the Western Education and Library Board since September 2000*

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### **Have you always worked in libraries?**

Yes, apart from summer jobs. I am also a qualified teacher. My first posts were as a children's librarian in various services, then I moved into more general management roles in Newport, South Wales.

### **What are your professional interests?**

My main interests are training, ICT and children's work, although I am also very interested in marketing, reader development, local studies, services for older

people and the role of libraries in tackling social exclusion.

I was fortunate enough to represent Wales on the group that compiled the training section of the Building the New Library Network report and I was a member of the People's Network co-ordination group for Wales. I have also been involved in professional education as an external examiner at Aberystwyth University and doing some lecturing on British Council courses.

### **Why did you decide to move to Northern Ireland?**

I was ready for a change after 7 years as Chief Librarian in Newport. I already had a good impression of the WELB in my mind as a result of the ISTAR Project (an EU-funded project which provided public access to ICT facilities and training in four WELB libraries with an ISTAR officer in each library) and the involvement of WELB staff in the Library Association. So, when I saw the post advertised I came over and spent a few days exploring the area with my husband, visiting libraries as we went, and I decided to apply.



### **Is the library service here very different from that in Wales?**

The main issues are the same – providing a quality library service to customers, customer care, integrating electronic and more traditional services, targeting social need, partnership working, raising the profile of the library service. However, the funding mechanisms and structures are very different – I find being part of an Education and Library Board excellent, as it positions the library service firmly within the context of lifelong learning. And job evaluation and equality impact assessments, both of which have taken up much of my time during the last 12 months, were completely new to me. Working so closely with the other four Boards on core issues has also been a new situation for me. My experience has been that all libraries claim to work co-operatively but this often relates to peripheral activities.

### **What were your first impressions of the WELB?**

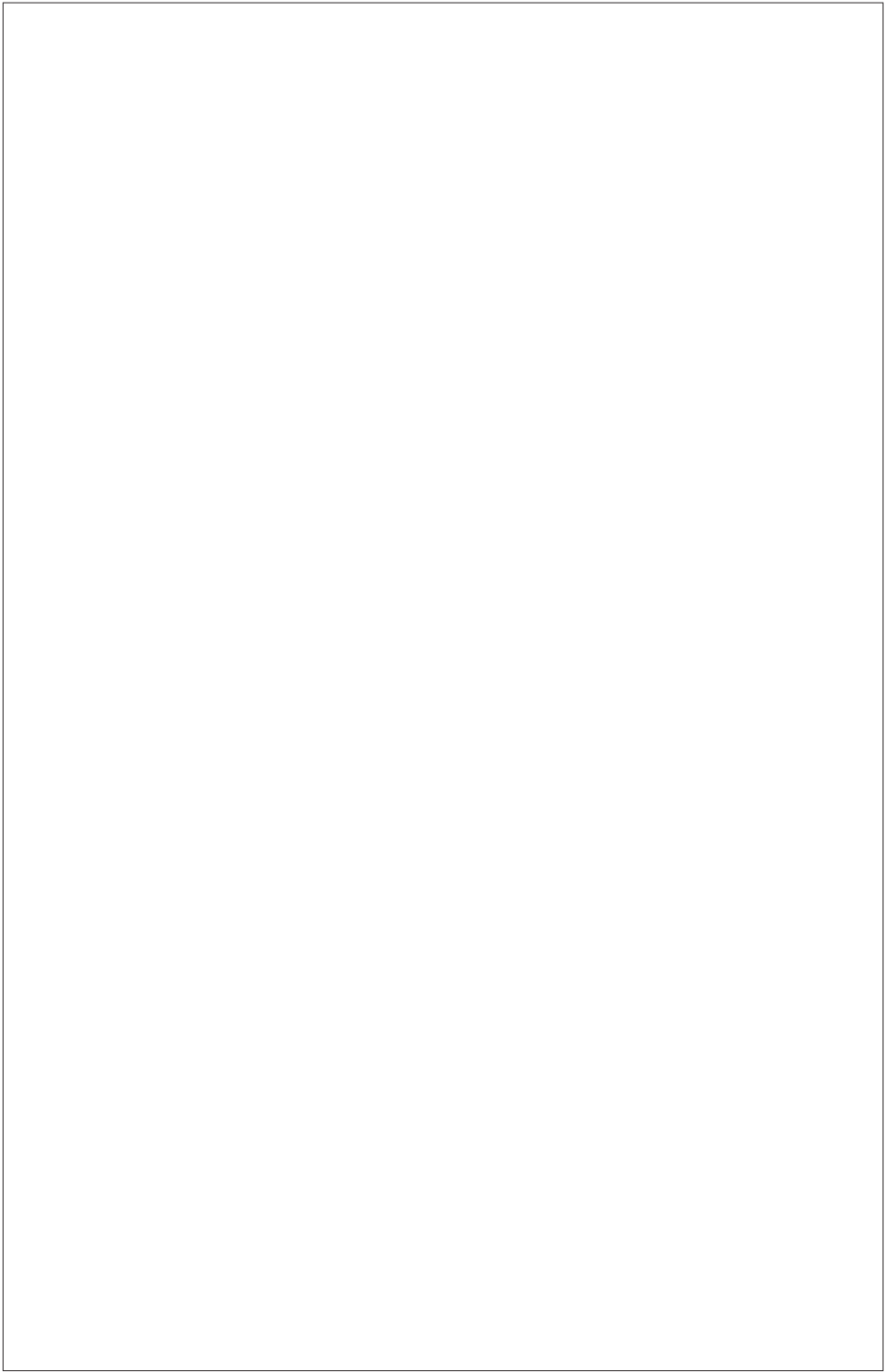
Great people, great buildings (mostly) and a bookstock that requires major investment. I was impressed by the web access in all libraries, *One Day in August* – a CD ROM which the library service produced of the Omagh Bomb Community Archive, the Centre for Migration Studies at the Ulster American Folk Park and the number of WELB staff pursuing professional, management and ICT qualifications.

### **What have been the main challenges during your first year?**

Simply meeting people, becoming familiar with the Board's services and getting up to speed on the various issues has been a huge and enjoyable process that still continues. Job evaluation has been a major challenge, both the process itself and the financial situation that resulted from it.

### **And what next?**

We need to complete the job evaluation process as soon as we can: it is a difficult and unsettling process and detracts from progress in other areas. The implementation of Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland will be a major preoccupation in the months and years to come and I am looking forward to the benefits that this will bring. It will provide library staff across Northern Ireland with the opportunity to use ICT, where appropriate, to do those things which the staff are already skilled in – reader development, accessing information, supporting learners. Equally important is the way in which libraries will provide access to ICT skills and facilities to people who might otherwise never use ICT effectively. This stems from the skills and attitudes of library staff, the relationship that they have with their customers and the fact that so many people feel comfortable in libraries.



# Elaine Urquhart

Assistant Director (Library) University of Ulster



Elaine Urquhart, MA (QUB), Dip. Lib. Info. Studies (UCD) was appointed Assistant Director, Library, in the University of Ulster with effect from February 2001. She oversees the management and direction of the library service across the University and contributes to the strategic planning of the Information Services Department. Previously she held various posts in the University of Ulster Library, including User Services Librarian, Faculty Support Librarian and Acting Head of Library Services (North). Before moving to the University of Ulster she was an Assistant Librarian in the Science Library in University College of Dublin 1973 – 1977. She is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin and obtained her Diploma in Library and Information Studies from University College Dublin. In 1985 she obtained a Masters in Information Studies from the Queen's University, Belfast.

# INFORMATION MATTERS

## News and Notes

Please forward contributions to:

- Mary Kintner, Rathcoole Branch Library, NEELB, 2 Rosslea Way, Rathcoole, County Antrim BT37 9BJ. Tel/Fax (028) 90 851157. Email:marykintner@hotmail.com
- Donna Ó Doibhlin, The Library, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dublin Road, Dundalk, County Louth. Tel: +353 42 9370417. Fax +353 42 9338313. Email: donna.odoibhlin@dkit.ie

### *Major Review of the Future of Public Library Services in Northern Ireland*

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The Department of Culture, Arts and Libraries (DCAL) launched *Tomorrow's Libraries*, a major review of Northern Ireland's public library services on 6 July 2001. The Review will include surveys of public library service staff, library users and the general public who are invited to give their views on the current service and to suggest improvements for the future. The review will culminate in an action plan. For further details visit the website at [www.dcalni.gov.uk](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk) or email:

[karen.mccullough@dcalni.gov.uk](mailto:karen.mccullough@dcalni.gov.uk).

View the newsletter *Tomorrows Libraries* at [www.dcalni.gov.uk/libraries.htm](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/libraries.htm).

### *New Opportunities Funding*

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£1.3m grant from the New Opportunities Fund will enable learning resources currently in galleries, libraries, museums and other places to be brought into communities across Northern Ireland. The funding will give people access to all aspects of Northern Ireland society, past and present.

*Belfast Exposed* will provide Internet access to a unique contemporary photographic library. The archive documents social,

economic, political, community and cultural life in Northern Ireland and includes photographs of buildings and infrastructure.

Website: [www.belfastexposed.com](http://www.belfastexposed.com)

The Ulster Historical Foundation's *History from Headstones* project will digitise an archive of more than 55,000 gravestone inscriptions from over 800 graveyards across NI and provide a computerised index.

Website: [www.uhf.org.uk](http://www.uhf.org.uk)

The project of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland will digitise the pre-1840 *Freeholders Lists*/poll books and provide an index of names. The *Freeholders Lists* include all those who were entitled to vote at elections or those who actually did vote. The Registers record the names, the townland where their property was situated, details of leases under which the land was held, name of the landlord and place of registry.

Northern Ireland Centre of Learning Resources (NICLR) will digitise *Timescapes On-line*, a virtual reality project charting the evolution of Ireland from an historical, social and cultural perspective from the Middle Stone Age to the present day.

Website: [www.niclr.com](http://www.niclr.com)

Library & Information Services Council (Northern Ireland) has received funding for the *Act of Union Project* which will create a virtual

library of material relating to and contemporary with the Act of Union of 1801. Project details in *An Leabharlann*, Vol 15 (1) 1999/2000, pp 33.

NEELB's libraries in Greenisland and Rathcoole are to benefit from a major lottery grant from the New Opportunities fund to set up a state of the art learning centres. The fund, which distributes National Lottery cash in areas of health, education and environment, is awarding NEELB £135,958 to help unemployed people, the disabled, lone parents and elderly people to access a computer and gain basic skills.

The grant has been awarded under the Community Access to Lifelong Learning programme that aims to help some of the most disadvantaged communities take up new learning opportunities through Information and Communication technologies (ICT).

***All Ireland Arts And Entertainment Website Launched***

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and The Arts Council of Northern Ireland have launched the first all Ireland arts and cultural website, and are inviting libraries throughout the country to ensure that local arts and cultural groups are given high visibility on the site. The web-site [www.art.ie](http://www.art.ie) was launched by Síle de Valera T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands in June 2001. The launch was hosted by the Chairman of The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Patrick Murphy, and the Chairman of The Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Brian Walker. Since its launch, [www.art.ie](http://www.art.ie) is attracting over 100,000 hits per month.

[www.art.ie](http://www.art.ie) offers artists and arts organisations the means of promoting their work, both nationally and internationally. The key section of the site is the listings section, which can be browsed through categories including location, artform, venue and dates. The site is maintained on a daily basis by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland; it currently includes over 1500 listings from more than 500 organisations throughout the island of Ireland and can include audio, visual and stills images. Arts practitioners have the opportunity to submit notices, book publication dates, job vacancies, reviews and other editorial material, and the site provides opportunity for feedback from users.

***BELB***

Belfast Libraries have employed a debt recovery agency in a bid to collect non-returned books, cassettes and CDs. The non return of these items cost Belfast Libraries £94,187 last year and involved a loss of 22,000 items. The losses represent approximately one percent of the total of two million items borrowed from libraries right across the board area.

***County Mayo Libraries News***

• ***Optical scanners for the blind***

Castlebar library was one of six pilot sites in Ireland selected to provide optical scanning facilities for the visually impaired. The system will provide access to the wide range of services through magnification software and text-to-speech facilities. Machines have also been provided in Ballina and Westport Libraries by the local branches of the Irish Council for the Blind.

- *Library catalogue on Internet*  
Mayo County Library's catalogue of over 150,000 books is available on the Internet. The catalogue covers all aspects of service including reader advice, borrower suggestions for book purchases, local history, mobile library routes, kid's scene, etc. Website address: www.mayolibrary.ie

- *Library Services to be delivered by satellite*

Mayo County Library, in conjunction with Cedar Software (Ireland) Ltd, have received funding from the Department of Public Enterprise to provide library service in remote areas of the county using satellite technology.

The aims of the project are:

1. to assess the feasibility of providing broadband infrastructure to remote communities using VSAT technology;
2. to facilitate the regional development of the Information Age Society;
3. to utilise broadband access to serve diverse types of users (e.g. educational establishments, agricultural/agri-tourism sector, SME's, Gaeltacht Regions and islands); and
4. to demonstrate the feasibility of transacting business electronically and independent of geographical location.

- *On line services to rural libraries*

Mayo County Library is planning to provide a variety of on-line services to three remote libraries in Louisburgh, Belmullet and Clare Island. The ability to have access to a high-speed broadband connection will be extremely valuable to the library service allowing access to the Internet, the library catalogue and any other council services which will be available online. The service will begin in the libraries at Clare Island,

Louisburgh, and Belmullet before the end of this year.

- *Mayo Archives and newspapers*

The library recently catalogued and restored its valuable collection of workhouse and Poor Law Union records. This collection has been catalogued and transferred to microfiche and CD-ROM, which makes it available to all branches throughout the county.

Mayo County Library has also initiated a project to digitise all its newspaper holdings. Currently *The Western People*, which is held on 165 microfilm rolls, is being converted to CD ROM. The digitised files will be made available over the library's network to all branch libraries in the county.

### *Everyday Millennium Library Initiative*

Olga McCracken, school librarian at Wellington College, Belfast was invited to meet the Prince of Wales and attend the Everyday Millennium Library initiative at a reception at the British Library in July 2001. The reception was organised to mark the completion of the donation of 250 Everyman Classics to 4,300 state secondary schools in the UK and 1,700 schools and libraries in 77 countries overseas. The contribution also includes a set of seven CD ROM Millennium masterclasses, an electronic resource to encourage pupils to gain the most out of classic literature.

### *Library and Information Services Council(NI)*

#### *Survey of Library Provision in Further Education Colleges*

LISC's Education & Research Panel is undertaking a survey of **Library Provision In**

**Further Education Colleges** with a view to making recommendations for improvement to DENI if appropriate. The Council is concerned about the apparent unevenness of library provision in Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland. There would appear to be some evidence that some Northern Irish FE libraries do not currently measure up to the CoFHE guidelines. Further details from Trevor Lyttle Tel (028) 9026 3154/5  
Email [t.lyttle@qub.ac.uk](mailto:t.lyttle@qub.ac.uk)

### *Library Association of Ireland*

The LAI has produced a poster in relation to the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000, for display in all library and information centres. The poster draws the attention of library users to the Act and subsequent Statutory Instruments which update the law on the making of photocopies of library materials. Further details are available from the Hon. Secretary, Library Association of Ireland, 53 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2.  
E-mail: [honsec@libraryassociation.ie](mailto:honsec@libraryassociation.ie)  
Web: <http://www.libraryassociation.ie>

The following officers have been appointed for 2001/2002:

*President:* Marjory Sliney, Fingal County Libraries; *Vice-Presidents:* Ruth Flanagan, County Librarian, Cork County Libraries, Gobnait O'Riordan, University of Limerick. Hon. Secretary: Helen Hughes, Fingal County Libraries; Hon. *Treasurer:* Catherine Watters, Information Manager, Price Waterhouse-Coopers; *Membership Secretary:* Nicola Rogers; *Administration Secretary:* Eileen O'Donohoe. Full contact details and names of the Executive Board members are available at: [www.libraryassociation.ie](http://www.libraryassociation.ie)

### *Linenhall Library Conservation Project*

The Conservation Project at the Linen Hall Library began in January 2001 and is primarily funded by the National Heritage Fund. The Collections at the Library consist of many unique, fragile and irreplaceable items. The library has been collecting material on the history and culture of Ireland for over two hundred years and now seeks to preserve for the future its printed book, newspaper and ephemera collections.

Conservation of the collections is essential for its future preservation and the ongoing provision of access. The following collections are in the process of being conserved: the Belfast Map Collection, the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty First Century Newspapers, the Pamphlets from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, retrospective binding of the Periodical Collection, the Sentry Hill Collection, the House of Commons Journals and retrospective books from the Irish Collection.

The Conservation Project is progressing well in the three areas targeted in the action plan: preservation conservation, interventive conservation and the provision of access. For further information contact Deborah Potter, Conservation Project Co-ordinator, Linen Hall Library Tel (028) 9087 2214.

### *LIRG/Elsevier research award for 2001*

John Cullen, Librarian at the Institute of Technology, Tallaght, won the LIRG/Elsevier research award for 2001. The funding is being used to analyse the library and information employment market in Ireland between April 2001–March 2002. Employment notices, job

descriptions, application forms, and all other relevant documentation will be reviewed and analysed. The project aims to report on the library and information employment market, both in general and sectorally by demonstrating:

- the number of positions available over the period stated
- trends in the dissemination of employment vacancy information
- trends in times of job availability
- where positions are available
- what salary ranges are being offered
- which specific skills are being sought by employers
- what levels of experience and professional qualifications are required.

### *Philip B Wilson Library*

The Philip B Wilson Library houses a collection of over 2,000 volumes covering local history, church history, agriculture, archaeology, Irish military history, transportation and architecture. The library also includes the 700 volume collection of the Ulster Quarterly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends dating from the mid 17th to mid 20th centuries. A growing collection of some 15,000 slides and photographs recording the social history, industries, prominent families and landscape and a collection of 6" and 25" Ordnance Survey maps from the early 19th century are available for consultation. The library is open weekdays only 10am-1pm and 2pm-4pm excluding bank and public holidays. The library is housed at Craigavon Museum Services, Pinebank House, 2 Tullygally Road, Craigavon, County Armagh BT65 5BY. Tel: (028) 3834 1635. Fax: (028) 3834 1331. Email: [museum@craigavon.gov.uk](mailto:museum@craigavon.gov.uk)

### *PRONI Outreach Centres*

PRONI in partnership with Armagh City Council opened a new outreach centre on 26 September 2001. The new centre, located in Armagh Ancestry, St Patrick's Trian, English Street, Armagh, has computerised databases of most of the records available at PRONI in Belfast, as well as an off line copy of the PRONI web-site. Visitors can use the computers to find information about PRONI and its records, and to obtain the relevant PRONI reference numbers of the documents they would like to consult at PRONI. The centre allows those living at some distance from PRONI to carry out some basic research before making the trip to Belfast. The centre, use of which is free of charge to the public, will be of benefit to anyone interested in research but particularly to the family or local historian. Armagh Ancestry is open Monday-Friday 9.00am-5.00pm. Closed 1.00-2.00pm and all Bank Holidays. Tel: (028) 3752 1802. Fax: (028) 3751 0033. E-mail: [ancestry@acdc.btinternet.com](mailto:ancestry@acdc.btinternet.com)

The Armagh Outreach Centre is the fourth of its kind to be opened by PRONI in partnership with local councils and others. In February 1999 PRONI opened its first outreach centre in the premises of the Border Counties History Collective in Blacklion in County Cavan. This was followed in June 2000 with the opening of the Foyle Outreach Centre in Derry City Council's Harbour Museum at Harbour Square, Londonderry. A third centre was opened in November 2000 at Ballymena Borough Council's Ballymena Museum, now at Wellington Court, Ballymena. PRONI now has an outreach network effectively covering the four corners of Northern Ireland.



## Queens University Belfast

### Rascal

The Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP), Queens University Belfast received a significant grant of £100,000 during 2001 for a two year project RASCAL (Research and Special Collections Available Locally). RASCAL is aimed at creating a new web-based directory of research and special collections throughout Northern Ireland. It will draw on the holdings of public and private libraries, archives and museums operating throughout Northern Ireland – for example, the holdings of the Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Library, Armagh Observatory's collection of meteorological reports which date back to 1795; the BBC Northern Ireland Archive based at the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum as well as collections in the University of Ulster, the Linen Hall Library, Belfast Central Library and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. The RASCAL Project Manager is Clare McVeigh. She can be contacted at the Main Library, Queen's University Belfast BT7 1LS Tel: (028) 9027 3617. Email [c.mcveigh@qub.ac.uk](mailto:c.mcveigh@qub.ac.uk)

The RASCAL website can be accessed at [www.rascal.qub.ac.uk](http://www.rascal.qub.ac.uk)

The website of the Research Support Libraries Project (RSLP) is [www.rslp.ac.uk](http://www.rslp.ac.uk)

### Northern Ireland Publications Resource

The bibliographic control of Northern Irish publications has taken a significant step forwards with the establishment of the NIPR. With the help of a substantial grant from the British Library's Co-operation Partnership Fund, the NIPR systematically acquires, catalogues and stores local material published since early 2001. There is no single institution

for collecting all Northern Irish publications and therefore no reliable way of finding out what is published, who is collecting it and where it is held. A dedicated database and web site will make information about Northern Ireland's publications available all over the world as significant publications are included and described comprehensively. Belfast Central Library and the Linen Hall Library are the main repositories for the material. The Education & Library Boards and the both universities in Northern Ireland are involved to ensure comprehensive coverage.

For further information contact the Project Officer, Deirdre Wildy, NIPR, Belfast Central Library, Royal Avenue, Belfast BT1 1EA Tel: (028) 9024 2740. Email: [info@nibooks.org](mailto:info@nibooks.org). Web site: [www.nibooks.org](http://www.nibooks.org)

### PADDI

(Planning Architecture Design Database Ireland) is a bibliographic database providing access to information on all aspects of the built environment and environmental planning in Ireland, North and South. Indexing of material began in 1980. Indexed material includes items published from c. 1865 to the present, but the majority of items date from the mid 20th century onwards. The Directory provides searchable descriptions of major collections of interest to researchers. The Links section connects to other useful web sites. PADDI is a collaborative project between the Architecture and Planning Libraries of Queens' University of Belfast and University College Dublin.

Website: [www.paddi.net](http://www.paddi.net)

### New Libraries Northern Ireland

**Ballymena**, County Antrim is to get a new library at a cost of £1.8m, to be completed in the

summer of 2003. Michael McGimpsey, Culture, Arts and Leisure Minister made the announcement in May 2001 during a visit to the new Open Learning Centre at NEELB's Library HQ.

**Castleberg**, County Tyrone is to get a new library which will be built in William Street at a cost of around £330,000.

**Learning Resources Centres** are being built on the Jordanstown and Magee College Campuses of the **University of Ulster**. At Jordanstown, the work should be completed by December 2002 and the new buildings will provide 50% more space, including an integrated service desk and 300 networked reader spaces. The LRC at Magee College is scheduled to open in August 2002 with 620 reader spaces of which 500 will be networked. A Rare Books room and exhibition area will also be provided.

### *New Libraries Ireland*

**Dundalk Institute of Technology** has recently opened its new, purpose-built library on the Dublin Road campus. The new library occupies the first and second floors of the Whitaker Building, in total approximately 3100 metres squared.

The Millennium library management system, including an online WebOPAC, <http://dkitlibs.dkit.ie> which is being implemented by all the Institutes of Technology, is almost completely installed by Dundalk IT. The new library has over 120 public access PCs, all of which have Internet access and Microsoft Office Suite.

The library is fully operational at the moment and the public are welcome to visit during opening hours, Monday – Thursday 0900 hrs – 2100 hrs and Fridays 1000 hrs – 1700 hrs. The official opening ceremony will take

place in late November 2001.

### **County Mayo Libraries**

Capital development in County Mayo branch libraries

- A library and one-stop-shop facility is currently being developed in **Achill Sound**.
- Plans for the extension of **Castlebar** library to include a new headquarters are at an advanced stage.
- Planning permission is currently being sought for a new library and museum in **Ballina**.
- The library in **Louisburgh** will move from a small room in the parish hall to a modern large facility in the Granualie Centre, which will include Internet access and coffee facilities.
- The library in **Kiltimagh** will move to new premises in 2001.
- Plans for a new library in the old hall in **Charlestown** are currently being drawn up.
- The library in **Claremorris** is currently being refurbished and computerised.

### *Public Libraries Buildings Awards, 2001*

Two new Irish libraries have made it through to this years shortlist in the Small Conversion/ Refurbished Library category.

**Buncrana Community Library** (Donegal County Council), a former Presbyterian church impressed the judges with *“the level of professionalism in planning and design . . .”*

The integrity of the church has been respected as far as possible. It is a *“striking library, with the new buildings designed in harmony with the original building”*. The main features include a well-sited library, an imaginative use of colour, with simple and bright internal signage and a striking use of

local artwork and artefacts, including a 'Drontheim' fishing boat suspended from the ceiling. The library has good disabled access. It was a pilot for the *Libraries for All: Access Strategy for the Library Service* document. Buncrana Library was featured in *Irish Library News* no. 199.

**Macroom Branch Library** (Cork County Council) is in a former cinema originally built in the 1950s. The building, which located in the town centre, is used as a cultural centre and retains theatre and cinema facilities. The judges commented that the library makes "A bold successful statement – it challenges the traditional boundaries of library redevelopment."

The Public Library Buildings Awards are jointly sponsored by Point Eight and Demco.

## New Publications

### *Directory of Libraries and Information Services in Ireland*

A new edition of the Directory is now available online. Libraries and other included organisations now have the facility to update their own entries, ensuring that the Directory need never be out of date. To update your entry contact the editor who will provide you with your username and password and the URL.

Editor: Brendan Teeling, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, 53/54 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 1. Tel: +353 1 676 1167.

Email: bteeling@librarycouncil.ie

### *Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland: An Equality Impact Assessment* 1 June 2001

This is a 26 page report produced as a requirement of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Equality duty. A copy of the report can be made available on request in alternative formats including braille, disk, audio cassette and minority languages for those

not fluent in English. From Helen Osborn, WELB Library HQ, 1 Spillars Place, Omagh, BT78 1HL. Tel: (028) 8224 4821. Fax: (028) 8224 6716.

### *Face to Face*

A blueprint for setting out a vision and framework for the future development of the arts and culture in Northern Ireland was launched in June 2001 and backed up with an additional £400,000 for the sector. The additional money boosts DCAL's planned expenditure on the arts in NI in the 2001/2002 financial year to £8.8m. The Arts strategy document *Face to Face* can be obtained from the Policy, Evaluation and Research Unit, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, 3rd Floor, Interpoint, 20-24 York Street, Belfast BT15 1AQ. Tel: (028) 9025 8904.

### *Library of the Ulster Quarterly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends CD ROM*

Craigavon Museum Service has produced a CD Rom of the Quaker Library materials housed at the museum. The CD Rom is a full HTML version of the library catalogue. The *Library of the Ulster Quarterly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends* is available free of charge to libraries and interested parties. To obtain a copy, contact Linda McGibbon, Craigavon Museum Services, Pinebank House, 2 Tullygally Road, Craigavon, County Armagh BT65 5BY. Tel: (028) 3834 1635. Fax: (028) 3834 1331. Email: museum@craigavon.gov.uk

### *Shooting from the Lip*

Mayo County Library recently published *Shooting from the Lip*, a collection of stories from Mayo's new young writers, under the National Reading Initiative. The book is the result of a project that involved the participation of the most creative students from all of the second level schools in County Mayo. These selected students took part in an intensive

course in creative writing under the direction of professional writer, Ré O Laighléis.

*Policy Statement on Library Services to Children and Young People* has been published by the Library Association of Ireland in October 2001. For further information contact Marjory Sliney, Tel: +353 1 8905536. Email: marjory.sliney@fingalcoco.ie.

Two reports from the Library Association Northern Ireland Branch: *Library Association Northern Ireland Branch Annual Report 2001* and *Libraries: A Service for Life*. Both are available from Elga Logue, Executive Officer, LANI, Belfast Education and Library Board, Training Services Department, 40 Academy Street, Belfast BT1 2NQ.

Tel: (028) 9056 4011.

Email: elga.logue@btinternet.com

LISC(NI) have produced two substantial leaflets which should be read in conjunction with the guidelines for good practice Libraries in Primary Schools and Library in Post Primary Schools. They are: *School Library Guidelines: Supplement for Special Schools* and *School Library Guidelines: Supplement for Nursery Schools and Units*.

Available from the Schools Library Service in any of the five Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland.

**re:source:** The UK's Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries has produced two new publications on the subject of access. They are *Library Services for Visually Impaired People: A Best Practice Manual* and *the Disability Directory for Museums and Galleries*. For more information or to request a review copy, contact Emma Wright, Resource Press Officer, Tel: (020) 7273 1459.

*Dictionary of Irish Biography* is a project of the Royal Irish Academy. Publication by Cambridge University Press, is scheduled for

2005. It will cover c.9,000 lives of prominent men and women born in Ireland and of those who had noteworthy Irish careers but were born outside of Ireland. The hard copy version will only include those who were dead on 31 December 2000. An electronic version is planned which will enable additions and corrections to be made quickly.

Ulster figures from the 17th to the 19th centuries are well covered but there is still considerable work to be done on 20th century figures.

The editor welcomes suggestions for names to be included in the dictionary and for volunteers to read over a batch of 20-30 entries to identify errors or factual omissions. If you are interested in being a voluntary external contributor or helping out, please contact:

Dr James McGuire, Managing Editor,  
Department of Modern History, University  
College, Belfield, Dublin 4  
or Tel +353 1 706 8322  
or e-mail JamesMcGuire@ucd.ie

### *New local history websites*

Ballymoney Museum have launched a website about the 1798 rebellion in Ballymoney

Website: [www.1798ballymoney.org.uk](http://www.1798ballymoney.org.uk)

The Craigavon Museum website contains information about the Plantation of Ulster, the effects of the Industrial Revolution in the Craigavon area, the Linen industry in the area and information relating to the Philip B Wilson Library. Also included is an on-line database of the Ulster Quarterly Meeting Library of the Religious Society of Friends.

Website : [www.craigavonmuseum.co.uk](http://www.craigavonmuseum.co.uk) or [www.craigavonmuseum.com](http://www.craigavonmuseum.com)

## Conferences – Forthcoming

### LAI/LANI Joint Conference 16th – 19th April 2002

The joint conference of the Library Association of Ireland and the Library Association Northern Ireland Branch will be held in the Stormont Hotel, Belfast Tuesday 16th – Friday 19th April 2002. The theme is *Libraries for All: Towards Social Inclusion*. Some of the topics to be covered include minority cultures, health information and bilingualism. For further details contact Elga Logue, Executive Officer, LANI, Training Services Department, BELB, 40 Academy Street, Belfast BT1 2NQ. Tel: (028) 90 564011 Fax: (028) 90 331714. Email: [elga.logue@btinternet.com](mailto:elga.logue@btinternet.com)

IFLA 2002: The 68th IFLA General Conference and Council will be held in Glasgow, Scotland August 18th – 24th 2002. Theme: *Libraries for life: democracy, diversity, delivery*. Sub-theme: *Building on the past – investing in the future*.

For further details see website: [www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org)

## Conferences – recent

The **Celtic Library Conference** which was held in Killarney during 1st-4th May 2001 was attended by 250 delegates and representatives from the library associations of Ireland, Britain, Wales, Scotland and the Northern Ireland. The delegates were addressed by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Noel Dempsey, T.D.

The 67th Council and General Conference, **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)** was held in the Hynes Convention Center, Boston, 16-25 August 2001. The Conference theme was *Libraries and Librarians: Making a Difference in*

*the Knowledge Age*. Conference attendance reached a record 5,573 delegates. Irish delegates included Professor Mary Burke (UCD), Beatrice Doran (RCSI) and Marjory Sliney, President of the Library Association of Ireland. Karen Latimer (QUB) presented a paper at the Art libraries Section. Many of the 2001 conference papers are accessible on the IFLA website at <http://www.ifla.org>.

## People

**Alf Armstrong**, Marketing and Information Generation Manager for NEELB Library and Information Service, has recently moved to a two year seconded post of Equality and Human Rights Officer for the NEELB. Alf has worked for the NEELB since 1975.

**Joan Atkinson** has taken over from Mona Hart as the INULS representative for the University of Ulster.

**Eamon Coyle**, a school library van driver in the WELB, donated bone marrow in a 90 minute operation in Bristol, in response to an international search for a suitable donor for a USA recipient. His account of the experience made local news in the *Londonderry Sentinel* 11 July 2001. Eamon's wife, Madeleine is well known throughout NI library circles.

**Peter Craddock** has become chairman of the Talking Newspaper Association of the United Kingdom. Peter has a long involvement with the provision of reading and information services for the visually impaired. He established the Coleraine Talking Newspaper in 1977, founded the Northern Ireland Association of Talking Newspapers and served as director of Share The Vision until his retirement in 1997.

**Dessie Curry** was appointed Contract and Service Manager for the Electronics Libraries

for Northern Ireland Project (ELFNI) and took up his duties in the Project Office at Carrickfergus Library in June 2001. Dessie has a good background in PFI and PPP projects having been involved in similar projects in the Court Service and the Probation Service. He will eventually head up an Intelligent Customer Unit which will consist of five Service Managers (one for each Education and Library Board area) and a Finance Manager.

*Mary Delargy* moves to the Ulster Scots Academy, Magee College, University of Ulster, as Research Assistant, starting in November 2001. She will be responsible for creating and maintaining a database of Ulster Scots Language and Literature. The project, funded by the Ulster Scots Agency, is initially for one year. Mary was Irish Language Librarian in the Linen Hall Library, Belfast between 1987 – October 2001. She has been involved in the Library's *Languages of Ulster* Project since January 2000.

*Sheila Fitzpatrick*, recently retired as Librarian of St Mary's University College, Belfast. Sheila came to St Mary's from Oxford City Libraries where she had been Chief Cataloguer. She was College Librarian in St Mary's from 1971 until September 2001. Prior to Oxford she worked in the Bibliographic Department, Children's Library and Fine Arts Department of Belfast Public Libraries.

*Katherine McCloskey* B.A., Dip LIS, A.L.A. was appointed Assistant Chief Librarian, Public Services and Education, Belfast Public Libraries on the 1st February 2001. Prior to going to university, Katherine worked as a library assistant in the Fine Arts Department of Central Library in Belfast and also at the College of Art library, now part of the University of Ulster.

In 1974 Katherine took up her first

professional post with the S.E.E.L.B as branch librarian at Holywood Co.Down. She later became children's librarian for the Board.

In 1978, Katherine moved to Belfast as Divisional Librarian for the North and West of the city. She spent the next 15 years in the Lending system before transferring to the Reference Services as Head of Department in the then Humanities and Local Studies Department, eventually becoming Senior Librarian, Reference Services.

The post of Assistant Chief Librarian encompasses public and education services including branch and mobile libraries, reference and information services including Lifelong Learning and services to education through the schools library service.

*Debby Shorley*, Assistant Director, Library and Information Services has left the University of Ulster to take up the post of Librarian at the University of Sussex. Debby began her professional career in Belfast Public Libraries in 1977. From there she moved to the Ulster Polytechnic's Art College Library in 1980 and has been at the University of Ulster ever since. She was actively involved in professional activities, originally in the AAL and later in the Library Association at local and national level. As Chair of ARLIS/UK and Ireland and LISC(NI) she represented the Library Association at international conferences on many occasions.

*Marjory Sliney*, Senior Librarian with Fingal County Libraries is the current President of the Library Association of Ireland. She has worked in academic, public and special libraries for over twenty years and was a Vice President of the Association for the past three years.



# Reviews

Hopkins, Linda (*editor*) **Library Services for visually-impaired people: a manual of best practice.** Re:source, 2000. £75, ISBN 1 9023 94437

This manual was commissioned by the Library and Information Commission as part of its programme of work to improve library services for visually-impaired people. The work is published by Re:source: the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries. This practical guide for managers and staff in both public and academic libraries, includes, among its contributors, practitioners from a variety of libraries and the major agencies for the visually-impaired. Current research findings have been used in its compilation.

In keeping with good practice, the manual is available in print (14 point Helvetica for clarity and in loose-leaf format for ease of use), braille, audio-cassette and computer disk. It is also available on the web at [www.nlbuk.org/bpm](http://www.nlbuk.org/bpm) and the web version has a bulletin board for comments and queries. One free copy of the manual has been donated to each publicly-funded library (including university and college libraries) in the UK. Hopefully, these copies have been widely distributed among staff because this is an impressively comprehensive and accessible guide that can be used by non-specialist libraries at all levels.

The manual contains useful information on types of visual impairment and in the demography of visual impairment in the UK. The Disability Discrimination Act is considered in light of its implications for the provision of library services and several chapters are devoted to alternative format materials, the union catalogue of these, interlending and suppliers. The subject of access is covered and the manual brings us right up-to-date on aids and assistive technology, accessible library web-sites, guidelines and standards and marketing. Library service policy and management and services to children are covered in separate chapters and the text concludes with a list of sources of information and advice. Each chapter finishes with a list references to reports, articles and books which will provide more information.

There are also useful lists of contacts and suppliers and a good example of this is the chapter on aids and assistive technology. The appendices include the HumanITy report to LIC on enhancing access to library based ICT services for visually impaired people and the summary of recommendations from Jean Machell's 1996 *Library and Information Services to visually-impaired people: National Guidelines*. These guidelines remain a clear and concise source of direction for libraries and are rightly referred to a number of times in the manual.

The manual will be of use to managers for its recommendations on the development of policy and of service planning. Local and national partnerships, which have always

been of vital importance in this field, are also highlighted.

The move towards the mainstreaming of library services to visually-impaired people – and, indeed, to other disabled customers – has been given impetus by the government's policies on Targeting Social Need and its commitment to social inclusion and access to services. The wealth of information contained in this manual can move this process forward but only with commitment from librarians. As the introduction says: *'Access to services is crucially dependent on what happens at local level and the most important factor of all is how library staff serve their customers.'*

The daunting size of the manual should not be off putting. Library managers, computer librarians, children's librarians and others should seek out the sections relevant to their field. It is a definitive piece of work which will be used for some time to come.

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*Margaret Smith is Senior Library Manager, Community Library Services, BELB.*

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McKay, Pat, **A Dictionary of Ulster Place-names**. The Institute of Irish Studies: The Queen's University of Belfast, 1999 xiv + 159pp £7.50, ISBN 0 853 89742 5

As noted in the introduction to this worthwhile publication, a rich and varied history lies embedded in the lore and derivation of place-names. This is particularly true for the province of Ulster which has seen more than its fair share of upheaval, and where the landscape has been adopted and adapted by successive generations of inhabitants. The result is a diverse, often simple but sometimes complex combination of translation and deduction that must be applied to identify the origin and meaning of a place-name and its subsequent transfer and transformation through time.

This can prove to be a stumbling block for many researchers, except of course those equipped with the necessary range of historical and linguistic research skills, and/or familiarity with the vast array of publications on place-name study. In other words, a satisfactory interpretation of the origin and meaning of place-names can require a considerable degree of judgement and experience. This publication overcomes a number of these initial hurdles and presents the layman or researcher with an accessible, systematic introduction to Ulster place-names which should enable the reader to cope with the majority of initial enquiries.

*A Dictionary of Ulster Place-names* is derived from research carried out by Dr. Pat McKay as a member of the Northern Ireland Place-Name Project at Queen's University, Belfast. The Project was established in 1987, and has published a series of more detailed volumes primarily based on topographical sources for Counties Down and Antrim, with one volume for County Derry. At the heart of the Place-name Project is an extensive place-name database which it is hoped will be published at a later date. The Project has also been responsible for the excellent *Townlands* exhibition which has toured extensively throughout Ireland since 1998. The method employed by Project researchers in place-name



research has been to gather early spellings of each name from a variety of historical records. Appropriate significance is then accorded to those spellings which are demonstrably older and more accurate, and these are assessed for any evidence which enables a reliable education of possible etymologies. Fieldwork is also an important part of the information gathering process, in identifying unrecorded local features, land uses or pronunciations which may have given rise to certain elements of place-name etymology.

As I have already stated, this publication is an introductory reference tool, not a comprehensive guide to the place-names of Ulster. The area covered is the nine counties of Ulster, and the author has made careful choices with regard to the selection of place-names for inclusion. Place-names selected include those from the *Gasaitéar na hÉireann/Gazetteer of Ireland* (Dublin, 1989) which includes all locations which have a post-office and therefore have some recognisable significance within local communities. Place-names not included in the *Gazetteer* which appear on the Ordinance Survey map, *Éire Thuaidh / Ireland North* are also selected for inclusion as these provide some further useful examples. Finally, other less well-known place-names that clearly have some special interest or other historical importance have also been included. Obviously, each of us will have examples of places of personal significance which have not been included in the *Dictionary* and I am glad to say that the author has apologised for any omissions in advance!

The most appealing aspect of Dr. McKay's publication is the manner in which he has decided to present each entry. This is both clear and concise. For example, the entry for *Pettigo* includes Pettigo's status as town and townland, its location including grid reference on the *Éire Thuaidh / Ireland North* map, its civil parish and barony, an Irish version of the place-name with suggested pronunciation, an explanation of the origin of the place-name with some supplementary information of interest, and its earliest identifiable form. When one examines the status of a typical entry it soon becomes clear how much information has been incorporated into this relatively handy volume. For example, places-names which appear include towns, townlands, villages, hamlets, parishes, housing estates, natural features, mountains, rivers, baronies, and counties. A degree of cross-referencing is also employed where this is helpful in understanding the supplementary context of the origin of a place-name.

The purpose of *A Dictionary of Ulster Place-names* is to provide an accessible reference book for the uninitiated. The author has therefore determined to keep technical terminology to a minimum. There is a short glossary of terms at the beginning of the book, which is both helpful and necessary, and in addition, a useful index of place-name elements appended at the end of the text. The majority of Ulster place-names have their origin in the Irish language, however, this publication clearly presents the range of linguistic sources in Ulster place-name nomenclature without prejudice. Entries include examples of Scots, English, Old French, Old Norse and Norman influence. An unfamiliarity with these or with the Irish language should be a positive incentive for acquiring this book. Finally the author has also included a select bibliography which should satisfy the further

researches of more enthusiastic researchers.

All place-names reflect the impact of the landscape on man either through observation or interaction. They are often the basic starting point from which initial forays into the world of local history and other enquiring research begins. Dr McKay's publication is an accessible and user-friendly guide, a more than welcome contribution to the printed reference resources available to students, librarians and the casual reader alike.

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*Crónán Ó Doibhlin is Librarian of the Cardinal Ó Fiaich Memorial Library and  
Archive, Armagh.*

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