

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?...

Public Libraries Creating Connections through Books, People and Places

Knightsbrook Hotel Spa and Golf Resort, Dublin Road, Trim,
Co. Meath
8th - 10th November, 2023

**LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND
PUBLIC LIBRARIES CONFERENCE 2023**



The LIBRARY ASSOCIATION of IRELAND
Cumann Leabharlann na hÉireann | Representing
librarians and libraries
in Ireland

FÁILTE/WELCOME

Is mór an onóir agus an pléisiúr dom fáilte a chur romhaibh go léir chuig an comhdháil seo don bhliain 2023. It is an honour and a pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Library Association of Ireland Public Libraries Conference 2023. The Public Libraries' Section of the Library Association of Ireland (LAI) is a core part of the Association and in this year when a new national library strategy sets out the future direction of public libraries in Ireland, the section committee have once again delivered a programme that is current, relevant and exciting.

The theme of this year's conference, What's It All About?...Public Libraries Creating Connections Through Books, People and Places promises examination, discussion and reflection on the strategic objectives and strategic enablers presented in the new strategy. In a busy and challenging working world it is necessary for us to focus on what is important, to gather together, to share ideas and to make connections.

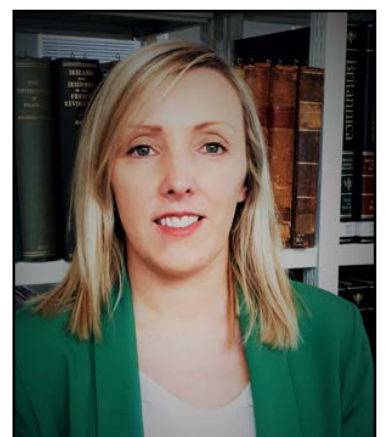
This exciting and diverse conference programme reflects the many ways that libraries can play a practical role in the implementation of the new strategy as well as showcasing examples of best practice in Irish public libraries, the challenge of digital libraries and achieving excellence in what we do. In addition, the programme also includes sessions on other pressing issues including a panel discussion on library capital building projects, the vital role of reading and a discussion on Irish language publishing.

An important aspect of this conference is the trade exhibition which gives delegates an opportunity to see and experience the latest in library products and services first-hand. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of the exhibitors and sponsors for their support without whom quite simply this conference would not be possible. Please take time over the conference to visit the exhibition.

I would like to thank Meath County Council and their library staff for hosting this year's conference. Sincere thanks also to the Public Libraries' Section Committee and all involved in organising this conference and for your continuing contribution to the LAI. It is deeply appreciated.

I wish delegates a successful and enjoyable conference and I look forward to meeting you all over the coming days.

Eileen Morrissey
President
Library Association of Ireland



PROGRAMME

Wednesday, November 08th

5:00 - 7:00pm	Registration
7:00pm	Pre-Dinner Reception
8:00pm	Opening Dinner
9:30pm	Table Quiz

Thursday, November 09th

9:15am - 9:30am	Conference Opening Address and Official Opening of Trade Exhibition - Eileen Morrissey
9:30am - 10:15am	<i>What's it all about - The National Library Strategy 2023 - 2027</i> with Dr Stuart Hamilton
10:15am - 10:30am	Lightning Sessions - Lorensbergs Ltd./Cubbie/Surfbox
10:30am - 11:15am	<i>What's it all about - To Read or Not to Read</i> with Patricia Forde
11:15am - 11:45am	Coffee/Tea Break
11:45am - 12:00pm	Lightning Sessions - Bibliotheca/Work Rest Play/Origin Care Group
12:00pm - 1:15pm	<i>What's it all about - From the Ground Up - Library Capital Building Projects - a practical discussion</i> with Emer O'Brien, Damien Brady & Catherine Gallagher.
1:15pm - 1:30pm	Lightning Sessions - Bolinda/The Design Concept/Healthcare 21
1:30pm	Lunch
2:15pm	Bus leaves - Visit to Trim Library & Cultural Centre
2:30pm - 3:30pm	<i>What's it all about - Meath's Cultural Experience</i>

Thursday continued...

7:00pm	Pre-Dinner Drinks Reception
8:00pm	Gala Conference Dinner - after dinner speaker John MacKenna

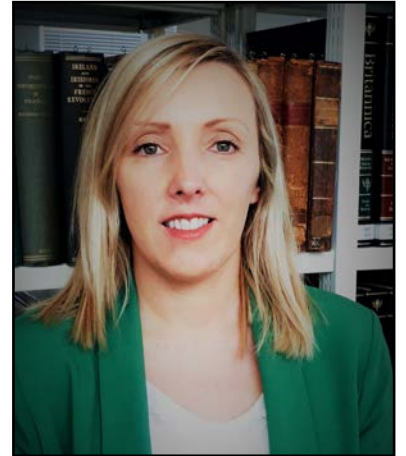
Friday, November 10th

9:15am - 10:00am	<i>What's it all about - Grabbing Your Oyster - Positioning ourselves to face an uncertain environment</i> with Pearse Flannery
10:00am - 10:30am	<i>What's it all about - Digital Libraries</i> with Ruairí Kelly
10:30am - 11:00am	<i>What's it all about - Best Practice in Irish Public Libraries:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>'Libraries Beyond Walls': Connecting with Communities in Dublin City</i> with Enda Leaney- <i>Bray Library Comic Club: promoting self expression and wellbeing in school age children</i> with Vita Coleman
11:00am - 11:30am	Coffee/Tea Break
11:30am - 11:50am	<i>What's it all about - Best Practice in Irish Public Libraries:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>TY STEM Camp @ Lexicon</i> with Niamh MacCárthaigh- <i>Aistear & Your Local Library</i> with Ciara O'Brien
11:50am - 12:30pm	<i>What's it all about - Leabhair Ghaeilge sa Toghchái</i> with Róisín Adams, Máire Zepf & Áine Ní Ghlinn facilitated by Brendan Teeling
12:30pm - 1:30pm	<i>My Life in Books</i> - Tom French, Jackie Lynam and Nicola Pierce facilitated by Pat Lonergan
1:30pm - 2:30pm	Lunch and Close of Conference

SPEAKER PROFILES

EILEEN MORRISSEY

Eileen Morrissey has worked in the local government sector for almost thirty years and has gained a wide range of experience in strategic development for libraries, arts and cultural services. Eileen was appointed Wexford County Librarian in 2016 and leads a dedicated team of staff in Wexford Public Library Service.



Eileen was elected to the Standing Committee of the Public Libraries Section of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in 2021. She was a member of the National Committee for the World Library and Information Congress in 2022, chairing the social events subcommittee. Eileen chairs the Infrastructure National Strategy Committee that works with the LGMA Libraries Development in the implementation of the National Public Library Strategy. Eileen was elected President of the Library Association of Ireland in 2023.

STUART HAMILTON

Dr. Stuart Hamilton is the Head of Libraries Development for the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) in Ireland. He is the national advisor on public libraries and leads the implementation of the national public library strategy across 31 local authorities. He is the current Chair of the National Authorities on Public Libraries in Europe (NAPLE) Forum, and a member of IFLA's Governing Board. Dr. Hamilton was previously Deputy Executive Director of International Relations and Communications at the Qatar National Library where he developed the library's international relations, partnerships and outreach activities, and led the coordination of the library's opening in 2017/2018. Before moving to Qatar he was Deputy Secretary General at IFLA in the Netherlands where he directed the Federation's policy and advocacy work around copyright, human rights, Internet governance, and all issues relating to access to information, libraries and the digital environment. He was responsible for IFLA's engagement with WIPO and UNESCO, as well as work relating to WSIS, the IGF, and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He holds a PhD in Library and Information Science from the Royal School of Library and Information Science in Copenhagen, Denmark.



PATRICIA FORDE

Patricia Forde is from Galway and writes books for children in both Irish and English. Her first novel *The Wordsmith* was published to great critical acclaim in 2015. It has since been published in the United States, Australia, Denmark, Russia, Turkey and the Netherlands. It has won a White Raven Award from the International Youth Library, is an American Library Association Notable Book for Children in the United States, and was shortlisted for the Children's Book of the Year Award in Ireland.



She also writes Picture Books and in 2020 was commissioned by Galway 2020, European Capital of Culture to write a picture book for children which was given free to every child who started school in Galway in 2020. The book was released in Irish and in English and was entitled *To The Island /An tOileán Thiar*. It was illustrated by Nicola Bernardelli.

She has released two new books in 2023: *The Girl Who Fell to Earth* (Little Island) and *An Mactíre Deireannach* (Futa Fata). *The Girl Who Fell to Earth* is nominated for an An Post Book of the Year Award. In June 2023, Patricia became Ireland's seventh Laureate na nÓg.

EMER O'BRIEN

Emer O'Brien is County Librarian for Cork County Council. She has responsibility for the Library and Arts Service, is Creative Ireland coordinator for Cork County and is Chair of the Cork City and County Archives.

She is also a member of the Library Development Committee at the LGMA. Since taking up the post in 2019, she has opened 3 new libraries in Bandon, Kanturk and Kinsale and procured 3 new mobile library vans.



DAMIEN BRADY

Damien Brady is Limerick City & County Librarian. He has previously worked with Wicklow, Tipperary, Waterford and Limerick County Library Service. He has served on a number of national library committees, and currently sits on the Library Infrastructure Committee. Damien has a particular interest in European Libraries and has organised study trips for the County & City Librarians section to Finland, Norway, Denmark, Holland and Catalonia.



He is currently working on plans for a new city library for Limerick and as part of the planning process, he has visited a number of award winning European Libraries including Birmingham and South Shields in the UK, Caen and Thionville, in France, Aarhus & Copenhagen in Denmark, Stockholm and Malmo in Sweden and Oslo and Drammen in Norway.

Away from work, he enjoys golf, travel and walking.

CATHERINE GALLAGHER

Catherine Gallagher is currently the county librarian in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. Her role includes overseeing library service for the county and also a broader culture brief including arts, music generation and Creative Ireland co-ordinator.

Prior to working in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Catherine had worked in Galway County Council, serving as City and County Librarian for two years. Previously, she worked for South Dublin Libraries, joining as a library assistant and working in a variety of library settings.



Before joining libraries, she worked in a variety of roles, both public and private sector including adult education, primary and secondary teaching, Boots the Chemist and Diageo and also had completed a VSO.

Catherine holds a BA, MA, H Dip in Education, H Dip in Librarianship and diploma in change management. She is a current member of the LAI Council, sits on the Professional Standards Committee and has previously served as Hon Treasurer for the LAI and was involved with the YLG.

JOHN MACKENNA

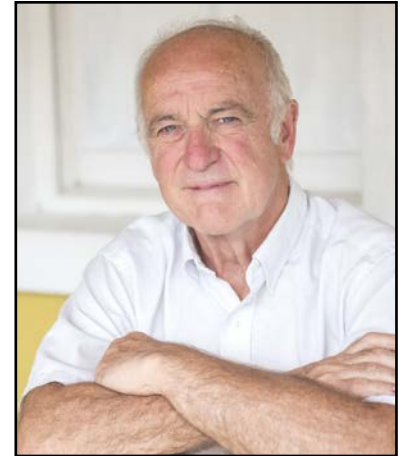
John MacKenna is the author of twenty-three books, a dozen stage plays and four radio plays.

He is a winner of the Irish Times, Hennessy and C Day Lewis Awards. His radio work has won him a Jacobs Award and a Worldplay Silver Medal at the New York radio festival.

He teaches creative writing at Maynooth University and The Hedge School on the Moone in Co Kildare.

He will direct *Between Your Love and Mine*, a requiem written with Leonard Cohen, next year.

His current book is *Absent Friend* - a memoir of his thirty-year friendship with Cohen. He lives in Co Carlow.



PEARCE FLANNERY

Pearce Flannery is the founder of the acclaimed Pragmatica organisation, a cutting edge business consultancy renowned for their high impact training programmes. He is an experienced business leader having held senior positions with a variety of multi-national organisations . Pearce has worked in Italy, Spain, UK and USA prior to returning to Ireland to set up his own business.

An award winning entrepreneur Pearce is a former winner of the Marketing Institute of Irelands Marketing Person of the Year award and was winner the PWC JCI Young Entrepreneur of the Year. He was made a fellow of the IMI in 2008.

Peace is the author of the Number 1 best selling business book 'Grabbing the Oyster - Anecdotes and Advice from Icons of Irish Business'. He is also the author of numerous other business books including the critically acclaimed 'Create Your Own Reality'.



RÚAIRÍ KELLY

Ruairí first began working with Foróige in 2005, co-facilitating radio and arts groups with Foróige in Mayo. Having a keen interest in science and technology he continued to develop ways of integrating these subjects in to his youth work practice, eventually setting up a digital youth hub in what is now known as the Foróige hub in Castlebar



Soon after that he began building on his interest in STEAM and Digital Youth Work, co-founding the Mayo STEAM Network in 2017 and then specialising as a Digital Youth Worker through Maynooth University. These days he is part of the newly established national team dedicated to digital youth work and known as Foróige GO with a particular focus on the Digital Libraries pilot project in conjunction with Libraries Ireland and the LGMA. The project aims to open up Collaboration between Foróige and and Libraries around the country to offer digital youth work and 21st century skills across the networks

He began his role as Digital Programmes Coordinator in December 2021.

ENDA LEANEY

Enda Leaney is a Divisional Librarian with Dublin City Libraries. He is responsible for Community, Children's Services and Social Inclusion.

He manages the Library in the Community outreach programme, Children's Services, and Prison Library services. Particular areas of interest include community engagement and adult literacy



CIARA O'BRIEN

Ciara O'Brien is a Senior Librarian with DLR Libraries.

VITA COLEMAN

Vita Coleman is a librarian based in Bray Public Library, where she manages outreach and event programming. She has worked with Children's Books Ireland as reading guide editor, section editor, book doctor, and reading pack writer, as well as volunteering as a book reviewer. She is currently Patron Nominee on the outgoing board of Cherrywood Educate Together National School. She likes graphic novels, swimming pools, walking at night, and drawing badly. When not attending to these things, she can be found in the gym lifting tiny weights and walking at a pitifully slight incline.



NIAMH MACCÁRTHAIGH

Niamh Mac Cárthaigh is a Library Staff Officer with DLR Libraries.

Along with day to day library work, she enjoys working on library accessibility and digital literacy projects. She is the chairperson of DLR Libraries Accessible Services Working Group. She has contributed to the development of the Lexicon Lab STEAM programme and is currently participating the European- wide ADELE Project.



BRENDAN TEELING

Brendan Teeling is Deputy City Librarian with Dublin City Council. He led the tender and then the implementation of the first national Library Management System project, which brought Sierra to the desktops of library staff around the country. He then played the same role in bringing Spydus to the browsers of library staff. He chairs the LMS OPAC, App, & Communications Working Group.



RÓISÍN ADAMS

Róisín Adams is an editor with Futa Fata, a Galway-based publishing house that specialises in Irish-language books for children. She has a PhD in the history of Irish-language publishing for children and is an accredited translator. Before joining the Futa Fata team she spent many years teaching Irish to adults with the likes of Gaelchultúr and Maynooth University, specialising in advanced writing skills, grammar and translation.



MÁIRE ZEPF

Máire Zepf has written 16 books for children, from picture books to a YA verse novel. Winner of the KPMG/CBI Children's Book of the Year, 4 LAI Children's Book Awards and 2 international White Ravens among many others, her books appear in 10 languages worldwide. Her 'Rita' series of picture books with illustrator Mr. Ando is being adapted for television. The Co. Down author was the first Children's Writing Fellow for Northern Ireland, based at the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry at QUB. Is údar don aos óg í Máire Zepf. Tá sé leabhar déag scríofa aici, idir phictiúrleabhair do na léitheoirí is óige, úrscéalta staire agus úrscéal véarsaíochta do dhéagóirí. Tá go leor duaiseanna bainte amach aici, ina measc Gradam Leabhar na Bliana de chuid Leabhair Pháistí Éireann, 4 chinn de Gradam Chumann Litearthachta na hÉireann agus White Raven faoi dhó. Tá a cuid leabhair aistrithe anois go 10 dteanga ar fud an domhain.



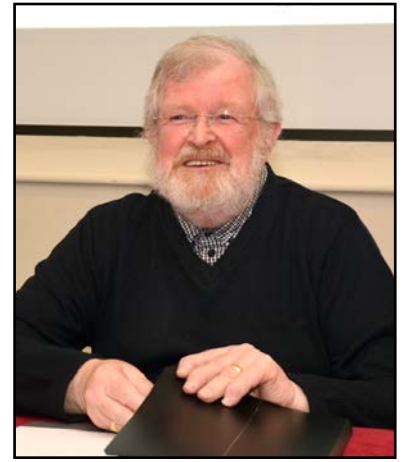
ÁINE NÍ GHLINN

Áine Ní Ghlinn is a poet and children's writer and was Ireland's Laureate na nÓg, Children's Literature Laureate 2020-2023. She has 36 books published - with three more on the way in 2023/2024. Her work includes poetry (for adults and children), young adult fiction, stories, novels and drama for young readers. She has won a range of awards, including the Patrick Kavanagh Fellowship, Children's Books Ireland fiction honour award, LAI Book of the Year, Oireachtas and Listowel Writers Week awards, and she is a three time winner of Gradam Reics Carló (Irish Language Children's Book of the Year). She was one of Ireland's three nominees for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) in 2023.



PAT LONERGAN

Pat Lonergan retired in 2014, having spent over 45 years working in library services in Dublin and Kildare. He was for many years a member of the Executive Board of the Library Association of Ireland, and remains a member of the committee of the Public Libraries' Section, where he has at various times held the offices of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. He lives in busy retirement in Newbridge, Co. Kildare.



TOM FRENCH

Tom French was born in Co. Kilkenny, grew up in Co. Tipperary, and currently lives in Co. Meath, where he is Local Studies Librarian with Meath County Library. He graduated from National University of Ireland, Galway and the University of Limerick. He has received bursaries in literature from An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council, Ireland in 1999 and 2009, and his work was awarded the inaugural Ted McNulty Prize. His first collection *Touching the Bones* (Gallery Press, 2001) was awarded the Forward Prize for Best First Collection, 2002. The Gallery Press has also published *The Fire Step* (2009), *Midnightstown* (2014), *The Way to Work* (2016), *The Last Straw* (2018, Irish Times/Poetry Now Award shortlist), *The Sea Field* (2020) and *Company* (2022), winner of the 2023 Pigott Poetry Prize in association with Listowel Writers' Week. He received the O'Shaughnessy Award for Poetry in 2016.



NICOLA PIERCE

Nicola Pierce published her first book for children, *Spirit of the Titanic*, to rave reviews and five printings within its first twelve months. *City of Fate*, her second book, was shortlisted for the Warwickshire School Library Service Award. Nicola brought seventeenth-century Ireland to life in *Behind the Walls*, followed by *Kings of the Boyne*, a gritty account of the Battle of the Boyne, which was shortlisted for the Literacy Association of Ireland (LAI) awards. In 2020 Nicola brought us her eerie and deeply moving novel *Chasing Ghosts*, based on the ill-fated 1845 Franklin expedition to find the Northwest Passage. Nicola has also delved into the true stories surrounding the ill-fated ship *Titanic*, in her illustrated book of the same name, and is the author of a much-praised history of Dublin's O'Connell Street.



JACKIE LYNAM

Jackie Lynam is from Dublin. She is a librarian in Dublin City Libraries, where she has worked for almost 3 decades.

Her work has been published in several anthologies and journals, and has been shortlisted for the Anthony Cronin International Short Poem Award, The Bangor Poetry Competition and Write by the Sea Poetry Competition. Her non-fiction essays have been published in the Irish Independent and broadcast on Sunday Miscellany on RTÉ Radio 1.



Her first collection *Traces: Poems and Essays* has just been published.

EXHIBITORS

ALL VISION MEDIA

Contact: Alan Guerins/ Eamonn Nolan
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Europe Direct Galway for providing delegate bags for the conference

JK Multimedia for sponsoring the pre dinner drinks reception at the Conference Gala Dinner on Thursday, November 9th, 2023.

Meath County Council for sponsoring transport to and from Trim Library and Cultural Centre and a special thank you to County Librarian Ciarán Mangan and the staff of Meath County Council Library Service for hosting the LAI Public Libraries Conference 2023.



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