Archives & Special Collections Report 2018

Douglas Hyde, first President of Conradh na Gaeilge

Eoin Mac Neill speaking at a Conradh na Gaeilge meeting, c.1928

Canon Hayes, Frank Lyddy and Bishop Tom Morris, c.1955, Muintir na Tire Collection

Muintir na Tire Gathering at Rural Week 1938 at Ardmore
# Table of Contents

- **Introduction** ........................................................................................................... 2
- **Publications Based on Archival and Special Collections** ............................................. 3
- **Media Coverage Linked to Archival and Special Collections** ....................................... 4
- **Usage of the Archives and Special Collections Reading Room** ..................................... 4
- **Archives User Survey** .................................................................................................. 6
- **Visitors** ....................................................................................................................... 6
- **Participation in Teaching Programmes** .......................................................................... 7
- **Collections Discoverability** .......................................................................................... 8
- **Collection Launch Events** ............................................................................................ 8
- **Other Collection Related Events** ................................................................................... 9
- **Exhibitions and Seminars Featuring Archives and Special Collections** ........................... 9
- **Outreach** ..................................................................................................................... 10
- **Recently Added Collections** .......................................................................................... 11
- **Publications and Presentations by Archives and Special Collections Staff** ..................... 12
- **Digital Archives** ......................................................................................................... 13
- **Archives Strategy Committee Membership** .................................................................... 14
Introduction

It is a pleasure to welcome you to read this review of developments in archives and special collections at NUI Galway in 2018. The collections continue to underpin research programmes and publications, offer new teaching and learning opportunities and add to the global reputation of the University while strengthening its engagement with local communities and commitment to the Irish language. This report documents:

- Publications Based on the Collections
- Media Coverage
- Usage of the Reading Room
- User Survey Results
- International Connectivity
- Contribution to Teaching Programmes
- Collections Discoverability, including Cataloguing
- Recent Additions to the Collections
- Events, Seminars and Exhibitions
- Outreach
- Publications and Presentations by Archives and Special Collections Staff
- Digital Archives

The range of activities and initiatives reported is impressive. This all made possible by the passion and commitment of all the staff involved; it is to their credit that the rating by respondents to the user survey regarding their user experience was so high. In addition to the public activity described there is an enormous effort behind the scenes by staff, managers and the Archives Strategy Committee. We continue to be very grateful for the support and advice of the Committee Chair and its members, listed in the final section of this report. The support of the University Management Team and Galway University Foundation is also much appreciated and vital to the ongoing development of the archives and special collections.

John Cox, University Librarian


**MEDIA COVERAGE LINKED TO ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

The Lyric Feature. RTE Lyric FM, 18 November 2018 (from 00:24) (Tim Robinson Collection).

The Game, RTE television documentary on hurling, 30 July 2018 (Ritchie-Pickow Collection and Michael Cusack Collection).


Irish Times, 3 February 2018, “Joint custody – An Irishman’s Diary about cannabis, civil engineering, and two famous O’Shaughnessys from Limerick”, by Frank McNally, featuring Michael Maurice O’Shaughnessy.


Tuairisc.ie, 8 June 2018. “Cartlannaí ceaptha don 500 bosca d’ábhar cartlainne Chonradh na Gaeilge atá curtha i dtaisce in OÉ, Gaillimh”, featuring the appointment of Niamh Ní Charra, as Archivist to catalogue the Conradh na Gaeilge archive.

**USAGE OF THE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS READING ROOM**

The reading room was used by 2548 people, representing a 4% increase on 2017 (2439). Of these, 1157 used archival material, with 1278 collection productions (where a user consulted more than one collection in a day). In terms of usage of archives by category this breaks down as follows:
The Abbey and Gate Digital archives were well used, along with the Ritchie-Pickow Collection, the Brendan Duddy Collection, the Heinrich Becker Collection, Lámhscribhinní de hÍde, the Muintir na Tire Collection, and the Druid Theatre Company Collection.

In terms of category of user for the same time frame, this can be broken down as follows:

**Usage by Category 2018**

- Academic 2.1% (28)
- Business 0
- College 4.5% (57)
- Irish Language 6.5% (83)
- Lámhscribhinní 4.2% (54)
- Landed Estates 2.4% (31)
- Local Authority 1.2% (17)
- Personal 20.5% (262)
- Political 8.7% (111)
- Theatre 23% (294)
- Abbey + Gate 26.7% (341)

**Category of Reader 2018**

- Undergraduate 7.8% (90)
- Postgraduate/Staff 67.3% (779)
- External - Academic 21.1% (245)
- External - Other 3.7% (43)

This chart masks particular spikes in the year. Postgraduate and staff usage remains strong throughout the year with a tail-off in summer months. Undergraduate usage reflects the
academic year also being strongest in October-November and February-March. LIB2101 Archives and Special Collections Module students are also prominent in the first semester. In terms of external researchers, the Moore Institute Visiting Fellowship scheme has had a big impact throughout the year.

ARCHIVES USER SURVEY

For the first time a survey of archives users was conducted in the period September-December 2018, generating 55 responses. Key findings included:

- A high demand for the archives to be embedded into teaching materials, and for more digitised content to be made available.
- External users accounted for 47% of respondents. Only 33% of external users received funding support for researching archives, with the Moore Institute Fellowship Programme the most frequent funder.
- Respondents reported highest use of collections in Theatre and Drama (53%).
- 50% of users still value and need consultation with the Archivist team.
- A high majority of respondents reported being able to navigate the Archives web pages and online catalogues easily.
- Consultation of material by 56% of users was for research towards an academic publication or article. Postgraduate research was the second highest research purpose.
- The fields of landscape, folklore, ethnographic and cultural history of the west of Ireland, digital videos of drama productions, maps, and oral history were signalled as areas for continued/increased collection development and acquisition.
- 67% of respondents gave a score of 5 on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) to indicate their level of satisfaction with their user experience; a further 24% gave a score of 4.

VISITORS

Moore Institute Visiting Fellows, included Dr Barry Shiels, (University of Durham), Dr Ruud van der Beuken (Radboud University, Nijmegen), Dr Connal Parr (University of Northumbria), Dr Monica Mulrennan (Concordia University), Dr Stephen Enniss (Harry Ransom Centre, University of Austin), Dr Hilary Bishop (Liverpool John Moores University) and Dr Maggie Scull (King’s College, London).

Carolann Madden (University of Houston, Texas) recipient of a 2018 Fulbright-James Hardiman Library Archive US Student Award, working on the archives of Heinrick Becker, Abbey Theatre, Lady Gregory, Tim Robinson and Etienne Rynne.
Group Visits
Commissioners for Irish Lights, Board members, 22 June 2018.
Muintir na Tíre, National Board and AGM attendees, 29 September 2018.

Visiting Summer School Groups
University of Iowa, Creative Writing Programme.
University of Buffalo New York, Irish Drama Summer School.
Villanova University, Abbey Theatre Digital Archive Summer School.

Visits to External Institutions
Special Collections Librarian completed five-day Foundation in Irish Genealogy Essentials course at the Ulster Historical Foundation, Belfast, in February 2018, funded by the Library and Erasmus Staff Mobility grant. This included research opportunities at the Linen Hall Library and the Public Records Office, Northern Ireland.

**PARTICIPATION IN TEACHING PROGRAMMES**
The Special Collections Librarian provided the following sessions:

- Six sessions on LIB2101 Archives and Special Collections Module for 2BA Single Honours History.
- Introductory sessions on special collections materials for students on the following programmes: MA History, MA Irish Studies and MA English.
- Session on locating relevant study materials for students taking HI3115 Poverty, Crime and Institutions in Europe, 1750-1914.
- Session on finding theses for students on the Graduate Studies Module GS530.
- Sessions on Local History and Map collections for AR325, 3BA Archaeology.
- Ongoing lunchtime genealogist sessions for Library colleagues.

The Archivists were actively involved in these programmes:

- LIB2101 2BA Single Honours, lectures and practical work.
- Introduction to Archives for 1BA History, January 2018.
- Sessions with MA sa Nua-Gaeilge, cultural collections for the MA in Culture and Colonialism; theatre collections for the BA in Theatre and Performance; acquisition and appraisal policies presentation to the Masters in Archival Studies Class, UCD.
- Multiple MA/PhD/Undergraduate sessions in Irish theatre and archives.
• Delivery of new module LIB1100, Library and Information Skills for Academic Success, BA Digital Media Studies.

• Co-delivery of module CN1106 Introduction to Children’s Studies (B.A. Children’s Studies).

**Collections Discoverability**

With nearly 40,000 records now on the archives catalogue (CALM) and archival collections discoverable via the library’s main catalogue the greater discoverability of archival collections is having an impact in terms of requests for material and queries received. The following Archival Collections were listed and made discoverable via the Archives Catalogue:

- Dr. Heinrich Becker Collection
- Seosamh Ó hÓgartaigh Collection
- Patricia Burke-Brogan Collection
- RJ Ray Collection
- Tomás Ó Máiille Wax Cylinders
- Sean Brehony/John McGahern Letters
- Rynne Family Papers
- Landed Estate Collections, including Eyre Family Deeds, Wilson Lynch Collection, O’Connor Donnellan Collection, Blake Forster Collection, Taylor of Castletaylor, Hearne of Hearnesbrook and Ormsby of Ballinamore

Processing and appraisal of the Conradh na Gaeilge Archive is underway facilitated by the appointment of Niamh Ní Charra as a contract archivist from July 2018 to 1st January 2020.

Work on cataloguing the extensive library of the Dominican Convent of Jesus and Mary, Taylor’s Hill was completed, with 2321 volumes now discoverable in the Library Catalogue.

Other Special Collections (Books) catalogued included: the collections of Siobhán McKenna and Dr. Roger Derham.

**Collection Launch Events**


Event celebrating the acquisition and cataloguing of the library from the Dominican Convent, Taylor’s Hill, 17 May 2018.

Event marking the donation of the Markus Casey Collection, 18 May 2018.
Launch of Muintir na Tíre collection, 7 June 2018, during a conference to mark the event, “Rural Ireland: Ideals and Realities in the Twentieth Century”, 7-8 June 2018.

Other Collection Related Events

Event, 25 April 2018, launching the Michael Maurice O’Shaughnessy exhibition’s permanent home in the Alice Perry Engineering Building, accompanied by the premiere of the documentary Michael Maurice O’Shaughnessy: Engineering the Promised Land. This was preceded on 24 April by a guest lecture from Theresa Salazar, curator of Western Americana collections at the Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley.

Hosting of Association of Performing Arts Collections (APAC) Seminar, 9 November 2018.

Exhibitions and Seminars featuring Archives and Special Collections

Seminar, 9 April 2018, in conjunction with Cumann Staire Ruaidhrí Uí Fhlaitheartaigh Mháigh Cuilinn to mark the 300th anniversary of the death of the historian Ruaidhrí O’Flaherty, author of Ogygia and A chorographical description of West or Iar Connaught.

Display of related materials at Narrative, Archives & Memories seminar, January 2018.


Seminar, ‘Commemorating 90 years at the Gate Theatre’, Dublin City Libraries and Archives, 13 February 2018.

Judging Shaw touring exhibition, in partnership with Royal Irish Academy, Dublin. Events included a conference and exhibition at Columbia University, New York, April 2018, and Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and Irish Cultural Centre, December 2018. Other venues and events included at International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL) conference, Radboud University, Netherlands, July 2018; San Francisco Book Fair July 2018; Royal Irish Academy, November 2018.

Exhibition, ‘Máirtín Ó Direáin Reluctant Modernist’ opened 7th March, including material from the Taibhdhearc Collection and Eoghan Ó Tuairisc Collection.

Talk by Dr. Deirdre Ní Conghaile to the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society, 12 March, ‘Sagart ganiomrádh: An tAthair Domhnall Ó Murchadha & amhráin ar an sean-nós in Pennsylvania’ (An tAthair Ó Murchadha Collection).


Display of Dominican Library materials for launch event, 17 May 2018.

Screening, 1984 video of protests around the conferring of an honorary degree on Ronald Reagan at UCG, 25 May 2018.


Arts in Action event: an Evening with Joe Burke, 24 October 2018.

Display of printed materials on Yeats & Gregory family for visit by Gregory Gathering attendees, September 2018.

Arts in Action: An Béal Beo and evening event, Taibhdhearc at 90, 7 November 2018.

Digital Exhibition, TouRRoir, Food and Culture from the Archives, April 2018.


Exhibition Launch in conjunction with Lady Gregory Gathering, Elizabeth Rivers Sketches, 9 November 2018.

Display of volume of Irish Memorial Records with contextual background for Armistice Day, November 2018.

Explore Your Archive Campaign, week of 17 November 2018.

Exhibition to mark 1918 Election, 11 December 2018 onwards.

Display of material from Helena Concannon Collection at the “Why Not a Woman?” exhibition at Dublin Castle, 14-15 December 2018.

OUTREACH

The Special Collections Librarian provided:

Local History sources in Special Collections session for 14 students undertaking local history course at the Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna.

1.5-hour introduction to Special Collections for 32 students on the Introduction to Genealogy course offered by the NUI, Galway Centre for Adult Learning.

A workshop entitled Optimising Workflows for Digital Archives was held on 10 July 2018, and featured three institutional workflow presentations, two external vendor presentations, and a
roundtable discussion to exchange knowledge and capture debate surrounding emerging and shared challenges.

Social media campaigns to mark anniversaries of Lyric, Gate, and Taibhdhearc Theatres throughout 2018.

**Breaking the SEAL** project completed with over 120 students participating.

The Archives and Records Association Ireland twitter event #ArchiveHour was guest hosted by NUIG Archives and ESB Archives, with discussion of the topic “Exploring Identity, Language and Landscape in Archives”, October 2018.

We maintain membership on a number of national bodies which allows contact with other information professionals and researchers. These include the CONUL Unique and Distinct Collections Group, the Irish Committee for Historical Sciences, the Library Association of Ireland Rare Books Group, the National Archives Advisory Council, the Archives and Records Association, Association of Performing Arts Collections and SIBMAS, the International Association of Libraries, Museums, Archives and Documentation Centres of the Performing Arts.

**RECENTLY ADDED COLLECTIONS**

**Book Collections**
- John Arden/Margaretta D’Arcy (Margaretta D’Arcy).
- John D. Hayden (Gemma Hayden).
- Liam Ó Coinne (Anna Ó Coinne).
- Robinson Collection Additional volumes (Tim & Mairéad Robinson).
- Mary Robinson Book Collection (Mary & Nicholas Robinson).
- Conradh na Gaeilge Book Collection (Conradh na Gaeilge).
- Gifts of books also received from Dr. Roger Derham and Ronnie O’Gorman.

**Newspapers**
- Set of Revolution Papers from Dr. Gearóid Barry, History.

**Archival Collections**
- Perry Sisters Collection.
- Additional Tomás Ó Máille Wax Cylinders.
- Correspondence between Prof. Lionel Pilkington and Pearse O’Malley relating to the Lyric Theatre.
Additional Muintir na Tíre material relating to Frank Lyddy, National Secretary in the 1940s/50s.

Solon Kimball Notebooks relating to the Kimball/Arsenberg socio-anthropological study of County Clare 1930s.

Folklore notebooks of the collector Sean Ó Cróinín, donated by his nephew an tOllamh Dáibhi Ó Cróinín.

Margaret Heavey Collection; translations into Irish of classical texts and teaching material from the 1970s.

Pearse Jackson; workbook from class of 1945.

Joe Vanek Collection; draft theatre designs, drawings, notes, letters, photographs.

Paul O'Sullivan/Ryanair; Diary and transcripts relating to Ryanair dispute in 1998.

---

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS BY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS STAFF


Marie Boran, “This is no time for fainting”: case study on women from Cumann na mBán in Galway 1917-1918. Presentation at *Lá Stair na Mná*, Galway City Heritage office annual seminar, October 2018.


Barry Houlihan, “Home for a while in the Old Country”, RTÉ Brainstorm.

Barry Houlihan, “What we lose when culture and heritage are destroyed”, RTÉ Brainstorm.


Digital Archives

Druid Theatre archive; 56 videos of Druid Theatre productions from the 1980s and 1990s added to the Digital Repository.

Éamon de Buitléar archive; selected items added to the Digital Repository.

Harvard-Ireland Mission Survey; five field notebooks from anthropologists Conrad Arensberg and Solon Kimball were digitised and transcribed in a partnership project with Anne Byrne from the School of Political Science and Sociology.

‘Lyric 50’, a digital exhibition marking 50 years of the Lyric Theatre.

Muintir na Tire archive; the entire runs of the Muintir na Tire journals, Landmark and Rural Ireland were digitised and added to the Digital Repository.

Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe archive; 126 photographs were digitised and added to the Digital Repository.

Michael Maurice O’Shaughnessy archive; enhanced search functionality was added to the digital memoir project, along with a named entity recognition feature which captures spelling variances in placenames and professional terms, and also contributes to the capacity for linked data work to take place on these items. Two additional memoirs from the archive will be similarly made available.
Abbey Theatre archive; material from 2008-2012 from the Abbey Theatre was digitised in 2018.

A bid for funding to carry out automated Handwritten Text Recognition work on the archive of the urologist Sir Peter Freyer was submitted to the Wellcome Trust in October 2018.

Twenty hours of digital audio material added to digital repository, including podcasts of recent archive seminars and events, and talks by visiting fellows.

ARCHIVES STRATEGY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Professor Daniel Carey, Moore Institute, Chair
Dr. Caitriona Clear, History (replacing Dr. Róisín Healy, History, during Sabbatical)
Professor Marie-Louise Coolahan, English
Mr Peter Corrigan, Library
Mr. John Cox, Library
Ms Monica Crump, Library
Professor Mathieu d’Aquin, Insight (replaced Professor Dietrich Rebholz-Schuhmann, Sept)
Dr. Aidan Kane, Whitaker Institute
Ms. Caroline Loughnane, Registrar and Deputy President’s Office
Mr. Niall McSweeney, Library
Dr. Catherine Morris. Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance
Professor Sean Ryder, English
Dr. John Walsh, Gaeilge
Two members of the Archives/Special Collections team (Marie Boran, Kieran Hoare, Barry Houlihan), rotating per meeting

The Committee met on 16 January, 27 June and 26 September
Douglas Hyde, first President of Conradh na Gaeilge

Eoin Mac Neill speaking at a Conradh na Gaeilge meeting, c.1928

Canon Hayes, Frank Lyddy and Bishop Tom Morris, c.1955, Muintir na Tíre Collection

Muintir na Tíre Gathering at Rural Week 1938 at Ardmore