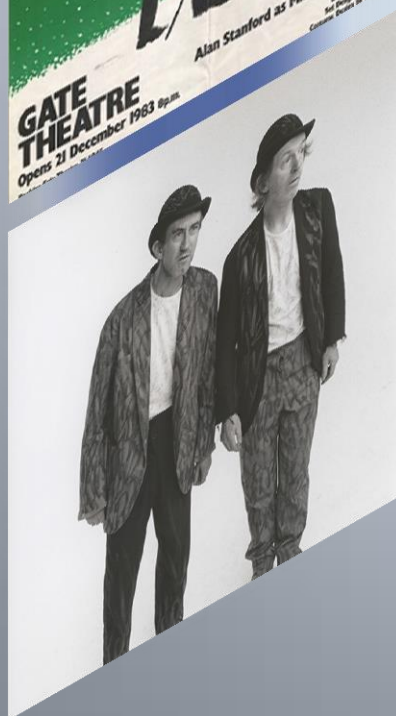




NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh



## The Archives and Special Collections – 2016

James Hardiman Library

# *The Archives and Special Collections in 2016*

Welcome to the 2016 review of the year for archives and special collections at NUI Galway. This year has seen some very positive developments. They include:

- the increasing profile of our collections nationally and internationally
- commencement of another major digital archive project with the Gate Theatre
- the imminent donation by former President Mary Robinson of her archive
- a national award for engaging Leaving Certificate students with archives
- the donation by the Dominican Convent of its splendid library

We also published an archives strategy to 2020 and an impressive guide to our special collections. Much else has been achieved, as outlined in the following pages. Coverage is selective in the interests of brevity and is focused on the wider impact of archives and special collections.

The successes reported reflect the creativity and commitment of the staff involved. A key point to note throughout is the importance of partnerships with, for example, the Moore Institute, the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance, and the Arts in Action Programme, in addition to the invaluable advice of the Archives Strategy Committee and strong support from the University Management Team.

## *PUBLICATIONS BASED ON ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS*

[\*The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Theatre\*](#) Nicholas Grene and Chris Morash, eds, (Oxford University Press, 2016)

Richard Robinson, [\*John McGahern and Modernism\*](#) (Bloomsbury, 2016).

Stanley van der Ziel, [\*John McGahern and the Imagination of Tradition\*](#) (Cork University Press, 2016).

Frank Shovlin, [\*Touchstones: John McGahern's Classical Style\*](#) (Liverpool University Press, 2016).

Cóilín Parsons, [\*The Ordnance Survey and Modern Irish Literature\*](#) (Oxford University Press, 2016)

Vincent Morley, [\*The Popular Mind in the Eighteenth Century\*](#) (Cork University Press, 2016).

Charlotte McIvor, [\*Migration and Performance in Contemporary Ireland: Towards a New Interculturalism\*](#) (Palgrave, 2016).

Paul Mohr, 'The de Birminghams, Barons of Athenry: a revised and supplemented lineage' in *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, 67 (2015), 48-68.

Louis Cullen, 'Captain George O'Malley 1786-c.1865: his manuscript narrative and smuggling career' in *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, 67 (2015), 100-125.

Jacinta Prunty and Paul Walsh, 'Galway/Gaillimh', [\*Irish Historic Towns Atlas 28\*](#) (Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2016).

Sean McEvoy, [\*Theatrical Unrest: ten riots in the history of the stage, 1601 – 2004\*](#) (Routledge, 2016).

Mark McCarthy, [\*Ireland's 1916 Rising: explorations of history-making, commemoration & heritage in modern times\*](#) (Routledge, 2016).

Derek Gladwin and Christine Cusick (eds.), [\*Unfolding Irish Landscapes: Tim Robinson, culture and environment\*](#) (Manchester University Press, 2016).

Fintan O'Toole, [\*Modern Ireland in 100 artworks\*](#) (Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2016), used an image from the Shields Family Collection (T13) to illustrate the 1926 production of "The Plough and the Stars" by Seán O'Casey.

#### TELEVISION AND RADIO PROGRAMMES BASED ON ARCHIVAL AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

RTE 1 documentary, "Ar Son na Poblachta", utilised material from the **Shields Family Collection** for a programme on Arthur Shields.

RTE 1 series "The Celtic Revival", episode on Michael Cusack, featured material from the **Michael Cusack Collection**.

RTE 1 series "Living the Wildlife" used footage from **Éamon de Buítléar Collection** on salmon swimming in streams in County Mayo.

"Oíche Chaillte an tSeanchaí (The Lost Night of the Storyteller)", documentary about Robert Flaherty's rediscovered 1935 short film, 'Oidhche Sheanchais (A Night of Storytelling)', transmitted on TG4, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016, used images from the **Heinrich Becker Collection** and the **Ritchie-Pickow Collection**.

"Building Ireland", episode 5, transmitted 4 November 2016 on RTE 1, looked at the architecture of the Quadrangle during a visit to Galway, using original architectural drawings and featuring an interview with Kieran Hoare, Archivist.

TG4 documentary "Triúr a Bádh" used images from the **Heinrich Becker Collection**.

The Book Show, RTE Radio 1, special episode on John McGahern and the Archive (6 February 2016), included an interview with Barry Houlihan, Archivist.

## USAGE OF THE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS READING

Between January and November, the number of visitors to the Special Collections Reading Room was 2,111, compared with 2,179 the previous year, a drop of 3%. Capture of pages with digital cameras by users may be a factor in reducing repeat visits. Of the total of 2,111 readers, 1,225 were consulting Special Collections material although we know that many readers consult material from both archives and special collections. 177 new users were registered during the year, including those visiting to use the Abbey and Gate Theatre digital archives.

Usage for the Abbey and, from July, Gate Theatre Digital Archives, was lower. Data for the first three quarters of 2016 (with 2015 figures in brackets) show 1,600 (2,222) logins, with 6,689 (8,746) items viewed. This may reflect a levelling off in demand following initial visits to discover and scope the digital archive for specific projects.

The most frequently used paper archive collections were: Kevin Boyle, Rev. Murphy, Lámhscibhinní de hÍde, Clancarty Papers, John McGahern, Thomas Kilroy and Shields Family.

The most frequently used book collections were: the main Special Collections books, many of which originated in the Old Library in the Quadrangle, along with the Killanin, Delargy, Ó Curraoin and Williams collections. Staff publications were also very popular.

## VISITORS

While the bulk of our users are drawn from NUI Galway staff, students and researchers, a sizeable number (453, or 21.5%) of the readers up to the end of November 2016 were external, including academics and researchers from other universities as well as from the local community.

Visitors came from, among other places, Princeton, Berkeley, Edinburgh, Oxford and Liverpool, with a particular focus on the Abbey, Druid and McGahern archives in 2016.

Archives and special collections proved to be a significant attraction for successful participants in the [Moore Institute Visiting Fellowship Scheme](#) and the Library was delighted to continue to contribute to its funding.

Groups of visitors included:

University of California, Berkeley, Drama Summer School (July 2016)

Villanova University, USA, Abbey Theatre Summer School (July 2016)

The University hosted many conferences and other events in 2016; a flyer about the archives was inserted in the delegate pack in many cases and this drew visitors to the collections during each event.

## PARTICIPATION IN TEACHING PROGRAMMES

The Special Collections Librarian provided Special Collections sessions to students of MA in English [Book History Module], 3BA Archaeology (AR325), MA Irish Studies, 3BA History (HI3115), MA Culture & Colonialism and the GS530 Research Skills module for PhD researchers as well as teaching the LIB2100 module for 2BA History students in conjunction with the archivists.

This year saw the running of the module titled *Archives and Special Collections in Research* which has been developed by the Archivists and Special Collections Librarian in association with the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies and delivered to the 2nd Year Single Honours History group for the second year. This module has contributed to increased undergraduate use of the Reading Room.

Another innovation saw the teaching of an 'Introduction to Archives' session for all 1BA History students embedded in their tutorials in January/February of this year, outlining our holdings and the basic information skills needed to access them.

Other programmes and modules involving archivists included:

- MA Abbey Theatre Digital Archive (Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance)
- MA in Irish Drama and Theatre (Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance)
- MA programmes in History and Geography
- BA Modern Irish Drama
- Discover the Archives module (English)
- MA in Arts Administration
- Graduate Research Information Skills module (Doctoral programme)

A notable initiative was a collaboration, funded under the EXPLORE scheme, with the School of Education, to engage Leaving Certificate students at Presentation College Athenry with the use of primary sources in their projects. This work came to national attention and [secured the CONUL National Teaching and Learning Award](#) from the Consortium of National and University Libraries in November 2016.

## EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Archives and Special Collections staff contributed strongly to the University's programme of commemorative events for 1916, [A Nation Rising](#). This involved support, content, research and digitisation of material for events and exhibitions, notably [A University in War and Revolution: 1913 – 1919 – The Galway Experience](#), which was the flagship exhibition throughout most of the year. Material from our printed collections was sourced and included in that exhibition as well as in displays on QCG/UCG women graduates, material relating to Jacobite Ireland, Robert Lynd and other Irish writers and the Irish-Jewish Literature exhibition. We also hosted the

[Shakespeare Lives](#) display, a collaborative project between Queen's University Belfast Special Collections and the British Council.

Also notable was a seminar about the Abbey Theatre archive digitisation project on 4 October, titled [Abbey Theatre Digital Archive: Journey and Destination](#). A distinguished group of local and external speakers reflected on challenges faced, lessons learned, new opportunities and the impact of the project on the University's academic mission, library and archives.

Collaborative engagement with other exhibitions and events included:

- *Mining the Theatre Archives* – Series of talks and events organised by Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance (Jan – Mar 2016)
- Launch and demonstration of CalmView archives system (February 2016)
- Launch of Jean Ritchie MA Scholarship and CD, *From Mountain to Mountain*, by Mary McPartlan, Aula Maxima (February 2016)
- [Yeats and the West exhibition](#) at The Model Gallery, Sligo, including a series of six weekly lectures and tours (Apr–May 2016)
- [John McGahern Anniversary Lecture & Exhibition](#) (May 2016)
- Launch of *James Hardiman Library: Highlights from our Special Collections*, an impressive guide to special collections by Marie Boran and Olivia Lardner (May 2016)
- Launch of [Colman Morrissey Collection and public lecture on Battle of Aughrim](#) (May 2016)
- [Yeats and the West exhibition](#) - Thoor Ballylee, Galway (June 2016 - )
- Exhibition of literary and theatre archives & daily tours, European Society for the Study of English conference, NUIG (Aug 2016)
- Culture Night 1 – Exhibition of material and digitised video from Druid and Siobhán McKenna Archives for lunchtime event in President's Drawing room, co-organised with Marketing Office and Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance (September 2016)
- Culture Night 2 – Tours of exhibition *A University in War and Revolution: 1913 – 1919 – The Galway Experience* (September 2016)
- Lady Gregory Gathering – Lecture on Abbey Archive, Arthur Shields Archive, with tour of archives (Oct 2016)
- Launch of the Brendan Duddy digital archive – [Roundtable interview](#) between Niall Ó Dochartaigh and members of the Duddy family (October 2016)
- [Digital Publishing Brownbag Series – Tim Robinson](#). Talks from Dr Nessa Cronin, Aisling Keane and Peter Corrigan on the work that has taken place with the Tim Robinson archive (November 2016)
- Tour, talk on archives and exhibition – President's Office (Spouse's Group – Nov 2016)
- Hosting of touring exhibition *Representation of Jews in Irish Literature*, a collaborative research project between University of Ulster, NUI Galway and the Royal Irish Academy (December 2016)
- Open day presentations and stands for Undergraduate and Postgraduate University Open Days



## RECENTLY ADDED COLLECTIONS

We have been fortunate to receive a number of new collections in 2016, including:

- [Muintir na Tíre](#), a major resource for research on rural Ireland in the twentieth century
- [Michael O'Shaughnessy](#), a graduate of the University who had an eminent career as City Engineer of San Francisco
- Library of the [Dominican Convent, Taylor's Hill](#), an extensive collection of 2,000 books dating from the seventeenth century onwards, including European language, religion, history, literature and education, with insights into women's education in Galway
- [Colman Morrissey Collection](#), a comprehensive collection of books about the Battle of Aughrim and the Jacobite period generally

A major forthcoming addition is the archive of former President of Ireland and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, announced in November 2016.

## STAFF PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Aisling Keane and Kieran Hoare, *Writing in the Margins, Unfolding the Tim Robinson Archive*. In "Landscape Values: Place and Praxis" (NUI Galway Centre for Landscape Studies 2016).

Barry Houlihan, *Decisions at Easter - Pearse Takes the Stage*, in "[Patrick Pearse and the Theatre](#)", Róisín Ní Ghairbhí and Eugene McNulty, eds, (Four Courts Press, 2016)

John Cox, [Communicating new library roles to enable digital scholarship](#). *New Review of Academic Librarianship* 22 (2-3), 2016, 132-147.

A case study of the Abbey Theatre archive digitisation was featured in MacKenzie, A. & Martin, L. (Eds.) (2016). *Developing digital scholarship: emerging practices in academic libraries*. London: Facet, pp. 35-37.

Presentations by the Special Collections Librarian included: *Some sources on the revolutionary period pertaining to East Mayo* (Swinford, April), *Landed Estates in Mayo & West Sligo* [with Brigid Clesham] (Ballina, May), *Resources in Landed Estates collections for the archaeology of Landed Estates in East Galway* (Portumna, July).

Staff also presented at:

Irish Protestant Playwrights Conference, Moore Institute, NUI Galway, June 2016.

Western Region of the Library Association of Ireland, June 2016.

Irish Association for the Study of Literature (IASIL) UCC, July 2016.

National Heritage Week, August 2016.

Archives and Records Association annual conference, London, September 2016.

## DIGITAL ARCHIVES

- A project to digitise the archive of the [Gate Theatre](#) commenced in February and its expected completion date is the end of July 2017. This represents a very significant extension to the digital archive coverage, accessible only at NUI Galway, of Ireland's theatre history, complementing the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive.
- Over 60% of the [Brendan Duddy archive has been made available digitally](#) on the Islandora platform, including contextual interviews between Dr Niall Ó Dochartaigh and Brendan Duddy that took place in 2011, shortly before the archive was donated.
- A [digital mapping project built on Tim Robinson's](#) archive was piloted, and presented at a seminar in November. The project focuses on Robinson's townlands index and maps, presenting extracts visually on Open Street Map, using Omeka. The next phase of this project is to digitise the entire set of townland cards, and make them available openly online.
- Digital Archives projects that are currently underway, and that are to be completed in 2017 include the archive of San Francisco Head Engineer Michael Maurice O'Shaughnessy, the Druid Theatre Oral History Project, and potentially a project arising out of archival material collected from local families by the University's 1916 Scholar in Residence.
- Finally, Fintan O'Toole, in a [review](#) of the *Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Theatre* in *The Irish Times* on 19 November, observed that "The third shift [in Irish theatre scholarship] is a change of emphasis from play texts to living theatre. This represents a huge challenge to scholarship... Reconstructing or evoking what actually happened is far tougher. It has, though, become possible, not just with changes of attitudes but with the availability of archives, **many of them digitized by institutions, notably the James Hardiman Library at NUI Galway.** The handbook is the first great flowering of this new archival approach."