



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

From the Archives

The Archives in 2015

James Hardiman Library

The Archives in 2015 – Some Highlights

This is a brief overview of some highlights in terms of archives developments in 2015, including use of collections, engagement events and new additions. Coverage is selective in the interests of brevity. 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 its predecessor, the Archives Group.

PUBLICATIONS BASED ON ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

Bennett-Jones, Owen. What Fred did. *London Review of Books*, 37 (2), [22 January 2015](#), 3-6. See also subsequent letter by Dr. Niall Ó Dochartaigh, *London Review of Books*, 37(3), [5 February 2015](#). (**Brendan Duddy Archive**)

Biancheri, D. Flying free from history and reality: dramatic representations of the “Crocodile Dilemma” in the theatre of Martin McDonagh. *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, 3(2), November 2015, 217-233. DOI: [10.1515/jcde-2015-0019](#). (**Druid Theatre Collection**)

Clare, David. [Bernard Shaw’s Irish outlook](#). London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. (**Abbey, Siobhán McKenna and Taibhdhearc collections**)

Gladwin, Derek and Cusick, Christine. [Unfolding Irish landscapes: Tim Robinson, culture, and environment](#). Manchester: Manchester University Press, January 2016. (Tim Robinson Collection)

Harper, Colin and McSherry, John. [The wheels of the world: 300 years of Irish uilleann pipes](#). London: Jawbone Press, 2015 (**Ritchie-Pickow Collection**)

McGarry, Fergal. [The Abbey rebels of 1916: a lost revolution](#). Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2015. (**Arthur Shields, Abbey archives**)

Ó Dochartaigh, Niamh (ed.). Memoir of an Irish economist: working class Manchester to Irish academia: Labhrás Ó Nualláin 1912 -2000. Galway: Ardcrú, 2015. (**Labhrás Ó Nualláin Collection, University Archives, Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe Collection**)

Rouse, P. [Sport and Ireland: a history](#). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015 (images from **Ritchie-Pickow Collection**)

Van der Ziel, Stanley. [John McGahern and the imagination of tradition](#). Cork: Cork University Press, 2015 (**John McGahern archive**)

Woodward, Guy (ed.). [Across the boundaries: talking about Thomas Kilroy](#). Dublin: Carysfort Press, 2014. (**Thomas Kilroy archive**)

TELEVISION AND RADIO PROGRAMMES BASED ON ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

- ◆ Tim Robinson: an interview. Arts Tonight, RTE Radio 1, [15 December 2014](#) and [26 January 2015](#)
- ◆ Jean Ritchie: A Celebration. Arts Tonight, RTE Radio 1, [22 December 2014](#)
- ◆ Dúiche, TG4, featured the Abbey Theatre archive digitisation project, with reference to other theatre archives, 15 January 2015
- ◆ Wild Atlantic Way series, RTE Television, included images from the 1651 Map of Galway
- ◆ Forthcoming TG4 documentary, *‘Triúr a Bádhaidh’* will feature images from the Heinrich Becker Collection
- ◆ Irish Film Institute documentary on W.B. Yeats included coverage from the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive
- ◆ Other media coverage included: interviews with the curators of the *Yeats & the West* exhibition, Barry Houlihan and Adrian Paterson, on the Pat Kenny Show on Newstalk FM (26 November) and on the Arts Programme on Galway Bay FM (25 November); a feature in the TG4 News programme on the Letters of 1916 event on 16 November, covering the Freyer, Shields Family and Bairéad collections; and an interview on the Keith Finnegan Show on Galway Bay FM on 9 November in connection with the *Liber A Galway Corporation Statute Book* prior to a lecture given to the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society by Brid McGrath, a Moore Institute Visiting Fellow.

USAGE OF THE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS READING ROOM

Visits to the Reading Room in the Hardiman Research Building to use paper and digital collections reduced by 7% compared with 2014, impacted by increased use of email to address queries, although the number of newly registered users increased, as did engagement with the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive:

- ◆ 2,179 users (including repeat visitors) have signed in to use the facilities from Jan 1st 2015 to end of 9 December 2015. This compares with 2,349 in the same period in 2014.
- ◆ 98 new archive users have been added to the user database during this period, up from 87 in the previous year. Many of these will use one or more archival collections over a period of time during their research engagement.
- ◆ Increased usage is evident for the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive, with a similar number of logins but more intensive activity. Data for the first three quarters of 2015 data (with 2014 figures in brackets) show 2,222 (2,185) logins, with 8746 (4121) items viewed.
- ◆ The most frequently used paper collections were John McGahern, Druid Theatre, Brendan Duddy, Douglas Hyde Manuscripts and Kevin Boyle. Other collections that saw frequent usage include Sir Peter Freyer and Shields Family in researching for the 1916 centenary, and, particularly at the time of the *Performing the Archive Conference*, Lyric Theatre and Thomas Kilroy.

Visitors

The [Moore Institute Visiting Fellowship Scheme](#) continued to engage use of the collections by visiting scholars; collections of interest included the Druid, Lyric Theatre and John Huston archives.

Further visitors came from, among other places, University of California, Berkeley, Harvard University and University of Exeter (Abbey Theatre Digital Archive); University of Ankara and University of Oviedo (Druid Theatre); King's College London, University of Warwick and Liverpool Hope University (Lyric Theatre) and Queen's University Belfast (Kevin Boyle).

Visiting Groups Included:

- ◆ Keene State College, New Hampshire
- ◆ University of Tokyo
- ◆ University of Kentucky
- ◆ University of California, Berkeley
- ◆ Villanova University
- ◆ Franklin University
- ◆ Princeton University (Alumni)

NUI Galway Students

A module titled *Archives and Special Collections in Research* 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. The module is fully approved and credited and incorporates essay assignments. Immediate-term aims are to extend it to Geography students and to develop a version for research programmes. This module has contributed to increased undergraduate use of the Reading Room.

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)
- ◆ Druid – Past, Present and Future module (English)
- ◆ Graduate Research Information Skills module (Doctoral programme)

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

A separate [annual report](#) has been issued by the Hardiman Research Building Exhibitions Group for the period from October 2014 to September 2015. Two exhibitions featured significant content from archives and special collections:

- ♦ *Connemara and Elsewhere*, marking the launch of the book of the same title and the acquisition of the Tim Robinson archive acquisition, was displayed until the end of January 2015.
- ♦ *Yeats & the West*, celebrating Yeats's connection with this part of the country on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his birth, was launched in July 2015.

Both exhibitions received financial support from the President's Office and represented highly fruitful collaborations between the Moore Institute and the Library. *Yeats & the West*, as noted previously, generated a lot of media interest and attracted many visitors individually and in groups, the latter benefiting from guided tours on many occasions, including Culture Night on 18 September, University Open Days and the 2015 Reunion on 10 October. The visitors' book indicated many countries of origin, including Austria, Macedonia, Denmark, Munich, Brussels, Helsinki, New York, Portland, Maine, Krakow, Naples, San José, the Czech Republic and Australia. Events associated with this exhibition included *Western Worlds: a day at Yeats & the West* on 27 November.

Another excellent collaboration, this time with the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance, was the organisation of the *Performing the Archive* conference, 22-24 July, co-sponsored by the American Society for Theatre Research and with support from the Irish Research Council. This conference featured a packed [programme](#) of papers, archive performances and book launches and attracted speakers and delegates from a range of countries.

The University's Arts in Action Programme launched the annual Jean Ritchie Lecture series on 5 March, providing an opportunity to showcase materials from the Ritchie-Pickow Collection. A further partnership saw performances at the University and in Belfast by students of a new play based on the Lyric Players' Theatre archive, bringing that collection to wider attention.

A further highlight was a display of material from the University Archives and the Druid Theatre collection in honour of the visit by Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall Camilla Parker-Bowles to the University on 19 May. An analysis of data from the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive was also presented.

2016 will see numerous events, including exhibitions, to commemorate the 1916 Rising. The Minister Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht launched the University's programme, [A Nation Rising](#), in the Reading Room on 2 October.

RECENTLY ADDED COLLECTIONS

We have been fortunate to receive a number of new collections or additions to existing archives in 2015, including:

- ♦ One Foundation Archive
- ♦ Proinsias Mac Aonghusa Archive and Book Collection
- ♦ Éamon de Buítléar Archive (further additions, notably audio-visual)
- ♦ John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy Collection (further deposits)
- ♦ The Abbey Theatre Digital Archive has grown from 563,986 to 719,158 pages

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS (BY ARCHIVISTS)

[CONUL](#) (Consortium of National and University Libraries) Annual Conference, Athlone, 10-11 June 2015 (two papers on: mediating user experience; enabling digital scholarship)

[DPASSH](#) 2015 (Digital Preservation for the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities), Dublin, 24-25 June (Abbey Theatre digitisation project)

[Performing the Archive](#), NUI Galway, 22-24 July 2015 (four papers on: Abbey Theatre digital archive; digitisation methodology and ethics; performance and power in Northern Ireland and South Africa; modern Irish theatre archives)

Houlihan, B. Taking Back the Stage: Interventions in the Performing Arts Library of the 21st Century. In Schlesinger, K. (ed.): *State of the Profession: Performing Arts Librarianship in the 21st Century*. New York: Theatre Library Association, 2015 (Performing Arts Resources, Vol 31).

Bradley, M. and Keane, A. The Abbey Theatre digitization project in NUI Galway. *New Review of Information Networking*, 20:1-2, 35-47

DIGITAL ARCHIVES

This year saw the completion of the retrospective digitisation of the [Abbey Theatre Digital Archive](#), along with the publication of [minute books](#) from the period 1904-1939, fully transcribed, accessible to the public and [launched](#) on 14 December at the Abbey Theatre. The minute books project was completed in collaboration with the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance and used the [Digital Collections](#) platform developed by the Library during the year. This archives publishing platform also hosts digital material from the Brendan Duddy, Tim Robinson and Michael Cusack Collections. An important related initiative is the implementation of the CalmView [archives catalogue](#), a powerful tool for searching archival collections.