

Children's Laureate calls for funding for school libraries



'A literacy programme that does not include a plan for well-stocked school and classroom libraries cannot succeed in making children literate'.

Speaking at the Parnell Summer School on August 15 on the theme of *Children and Equality*, Dr Siobhán Parkinson, Laureate na nÓg/Children's Literature Laureate, drew attention to an inequality of access to excellent children's books in primary schools.

While welcoming the Minister for Education's new [Policy on Literacy and Numeracy](#), the Laureate pointed out that 'a literacy programme that does not include a proper plan for well-stocked school and classroom libraries cannot succeed in making children literate'.

It is the most excluded children, she contends, children who do not have ready access to books at

home and whose families do not use public libraries, the children who are most likely to need literacy intervention, who suffer most when school libraries are run down.

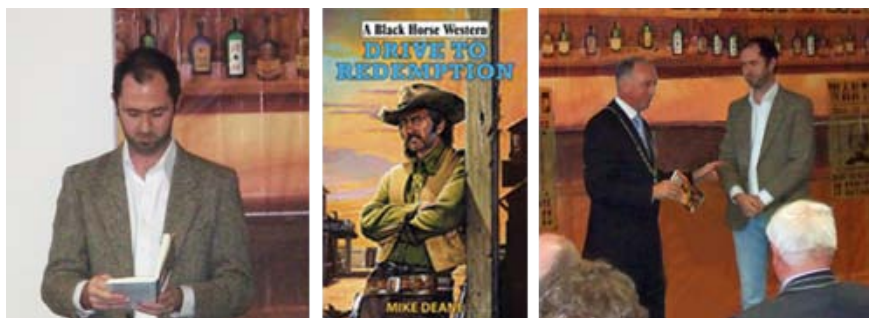
Read more on the [Laureate na n-Og](#) website and in the [Irish Times](#).

Librarian finds novel way to travel by train

On Thursday August 4, visitors to [Mallow Library](#) might have felt they had time travelled to the Old West. The library had been transformed into a saloon bar complete with fake swinging doors, wanted posters and a bar mirror begging to be shot.

The reason for this metamorphosis was the launch of staff member, Michéal O Flaherty's first book *Drive to Redemption* which has been published by Black Horse Westerns. It is an action filled story, set in a Kansas cow town, of a young man who sets out to atone for a fatal error made in his youth. Michéal chose to write under the pen name Mike Dean, a combination of both his parent's names.

Michéal has worked with Cork County Library for 8 years. Originally from Lixsnaw in Co Kerry, he lives in Mallow. For the past 2 years he worked in Cobh library and commuted there by



train. The novel was written almost entirely on that daily two hour commute.

Friends, family, and colleagues joined Michéal for the official launch which was performed by Mayor of Mallow, Dan Joe Fitzgerald, M.C.C, and for the presentation of the book to the deputy County Mayor, Noel O'Connor, M.C.C.

Director of Service, Louis Duffy added his congratulations and commended Michéal on the success of his book and the talent and commitment it took to turn a two hour commute into a novel. Mr. Duffy went on to congratulate the library service in general for its constant ability to respond creatively to the needs of the community.

In conversation with Divisional Librarian for North Cork, Bernie Wallace, Michéal then gave the audience some very interesting insights into his decisions to write a Western and the process of researching editing and publishing a novel. He has always been interested in the construction of the novel; this combined with a love of western genre films and an interest in the American Civil War prompted him to write *Drive to Redemption*.

Michéal has recently transferred to [Charleville library](#), which is only a twenty five minute drive from Mallow. So how will this affect Michéal's future writing? Michéal tells us "I'm stealing an hour's writing time at night"

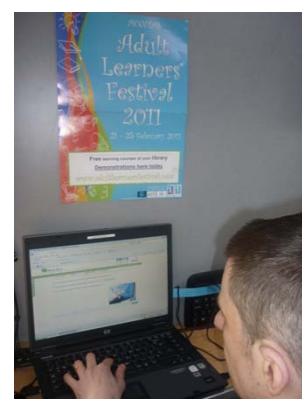
Michéal's next work is an eBook which is due for publication within the next month.

Western novels have always enjoyed popularity among library readers and Cork County Library staff are very proud to be able to offer their readers a book written by a colleague and delighted to celebrate what will no doubt be the first of many novels from the pen of Mike Dean.

Dublin City Public Libraries @ the Aontas Adult Learners' Festival 2011

This article by Anne Gannon previously appeared in [Explore](#): the quarterly magazine from Aontas, No. 18, May 2011, p.25.

As our contribution to Aontas Adult Learners' Week 2011 the Library Learning Bus parked in the car park of the Social Welfare Local Office on the Navan Road. We used the opportunity to approach people and explain / remind them how libraries can assist adult learners. We highlighted courses like *Websmart* (the library basic computer skills programme) and *WriteOn4Work* (NALA's distance learning website) and offered demonstrations on the Bus. We engaged people in conversation and altogether had seventeen individual conversations about libraries and learning – among other things! We gave each person a 'pack' made up of; 1



Library Access leaflet, 1 'people think libraries are grey' leaflet, 1 Spring Brochure, 1 Adult joining form and 1 Child joining form and also 1 flyer about the *WriteOn* distance learning programme. We also gave out the Aontas Adult Learners' Week branded pens and fridge magnets.

Thursday is not a busy day at this Social Welfare Office so the numbers were small, but the conversations were worthwhile;

- One woman was a part time worker whose only child was finished 3rd level and was now 'signing on' and planning to emigrate. She is planning to return to education to help with the loneliness.



- One man has just recently signed up for a SIPTU return to education programme where he works part time and is very excited at the thoughts of starting back learning. He also took a *WriteOn4Work* flyer for a friend who is unemployed.
- One young woman was very interested in the distance education aspect of *WriteOn* and came on the Bus to try it out. She completed the assessment section of the Digital Media module and seems keen to register. She also didn't know that libraries had free Wi-Fi so she went straight in to Cabra Library to start using it.
- A woman with a three year old child was reminded that she had not followed up a contact with [Cabra library](#) about joining the Toddler Group – so she intends doing that.
- Another woman with young child (possibly her grandson) explained that she spends most of her time minding children but that her main problem was she can't read. I talked to her about NALA and encouraged her to ring to be put in touch with her nearest Adult Literacy Service. She took the information.
- One man was working intermittently and was frustrated by the regulations around reporting any part time work – even if it's only a half-hour or pays as little as €20. But he obeys the regulations – he feels it's important to keep his hand in with his skills, even at the expense of losing benefits. He spoke about how important the libraries have been to him over the years.

In general, the people we met and spoke with were frustrated and sad, but trying hard to keep hope alive and all came across as full of integrity and even retained a sense of humour. A small drawback of the timing of this visit – as it was the day before the General Election 2011, most people assumed at first that we were canvassing, and gave us a wide berth! However, the presence of the Learning Bus, the posters we had dotted around the building (inside and out) and our offered explanations helped dispel that thought. The sunny day also allowed people to spend time talking and probably helped the overall mood of everyone – ourselves included!

Creative writing for all ages at Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Libraries.

Teenagers collaborate on online novels at Deansgrange Library.



A creative writing summer course for teenagers has just come to a successful conclusion in Deansgrange Library. Two groups (12 – 14 year olds and 15 – 18 year olds) drawn from a wide range of schools in the county, met every Saturday for 5 weeks to each write an online novel under the guidance of the poet Paul Perry, erstwhile writer in residence for DLR Libraries.

Each member of the two groups submitted a chapter every week, and the resulting novels, *Bitter Blood* and *Trust me* will be published online at the end of August. Paul was very impressed by the imagination of these young writers and identified real talent amongst them. A launch will take place in the autumn to celebrate the online publication of the two collaborative novels.

Chris Binchy appointed Writer-in-residence for dlr Libraries & Arts Office

[Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Public Library Service](#) and Arts Office are delighted to announce the appointment of Chris Binchy as our Writer-in-Residence for 2011/2012. Chris graduated from the Master's course in Creative Writing at Trinity College Dublin in 1998 and is the author of four novels. *The Very Man* was short listed for Irish Novel of the Year in 2003. Since then, he has published *People Like Us* and in 2008, to critical acclaim, *Open-handed*. *Five Days Apart* was published last year by Harper Collins in the United States. His journalism has appeared widely in newspapers and magazines in Ireland and Britain.



An 8 week Life-writing course with Chris Binchy will begin in October in Deansgrange Library. The course will focus on identifying participants' strengths, insight and personal style in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere. No experience is necessary but anybody interested in participating should submit a sample of their writing (up to five pages in length) to Chris at DLRwriter@gmail.com. The workshop will be held in Deansgrange Library and is free.

Chris will also be discussing the art of novel-writing at [Mountains to Sea dlr Book Festival](#) in September, alongside John Boyne & Claire Kilroy.

Kilkenny Library Service and the Arts festival.

Kilkenny Library Service was invited to supply literature to support one of the exhibitions held during [KAF 2011](#). *Modified Expression* was an exhibition of artists whose work is inspired by the written word or by the binding and recycling of books and paper. These artists were asked to respond to the work of the authors participating in the literature strand of the festival. Visiting authors included Belinda McKeon, Gerard Smyth, Paul Muldoon, Tobias Wolff, and Michael Longley.



Eala by Anne Harrington Rees, was inspired by Michael Longley's poem *A Swan's Egg*.



Photograph shows library books casually laid out in a special reading area that formed part of the exhibition. Note the background which shows words from the work of some of the visiting authors.

The Year of Craft

To celebrate the *Year of Craft* knitting groups have been encouraged in [Castlecomer](#) and [Urlingford](#) libraries. The group in Castlecomer has been meeting for over 18 months and held an exhibition of their wares in the library earlier in the summer. Now a third group has emerged in the City Library.

Members of this group originally participated in a knitting project organised by the Kilkenny County Council Arts office. The project expanded into the *Three Bags Full* project which exhibited felt cushions at the World Sheep Shearing Championships held in Kilkenny in June 2011. This project was supported by the [Ireland Wales InterReg Programme](#). Members of the group took part in the shearing of sheep (three full bags), washing and carding of the fleece, wet and dry felting workshops and finally, construction of the cushions. Some of this group wanted to continue their knitting hobby and now meet in the [City Library](#) on a weekly basis.



Two members of the Castlecomer group with some of their creations.

Leitrim County Library catalogues old Irish books

Most libraries hold collections of old books in Irish but when computerised cataloguing was introduced these books were often consigned to back rooms, along with other older material, for cataloguing, if and when time permitted. [Leitrim County Library](#) has now completed the cataloguing all of their stock of Gaeilge books. These are now available on [Borrowbooks](#) and already a number of



requests have come for some of the titles. The collection includes many of the works translated from other languages during the 1930s when Oifig Foilseacháin Rialtais promoted the idea of works in translation. All of these books are catalogued under the translator as well as the original author.

LIT Library wins €1,171,557 to lead major EU project on information literacy.

The [Limerick Institute of Technology Library](#) has recently received the great news from the [EU Executive Agency](#) (EACEA) that its application for funding under the [Tempus IV EU funding programme](#) was successful to the sum of €1,171,557. The securing of this funding is a triple distinction for Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT). LIT is the first Irish institution to lead a Tempus project in the history of the Tempus programme. It is also the largest sum ever awarded for a Library and Information Science project in the history of the programme and finally LIT have the distinction of leading and implementing the first project dealing with Information Literacy in the history of programme. Tempus is the European Union's programme which supports the modernisation of higher education in the Partner Countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region, mainly through university cooperation projects. LIT Library will lead a project involving 12 other higher education institutions in Romania, Greece, United Kingdom, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro & Kosovo to develop Information Literacy (IL) for lifelong learning and knowledge economy in Western Balkan countries.



The project will see the development of IL programs for lifelong learning and their use in curricula, development of innovative online IL modules for lifelong learning and the harmonisation of the IL programs with those currently active in Western Balkan countries. The project aims to strengthen the capacities of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans for the strategic planning and implementation of IL programs to instill transferable skills for a competitive, dynamic, knowledge-based economy.

This is not the first time LIT Library have been successful in securing EU funding for Library projects and in 2010 and 2011 they were successful in securing funding under the [Grundtvig Lifelong Learning Programme](#).



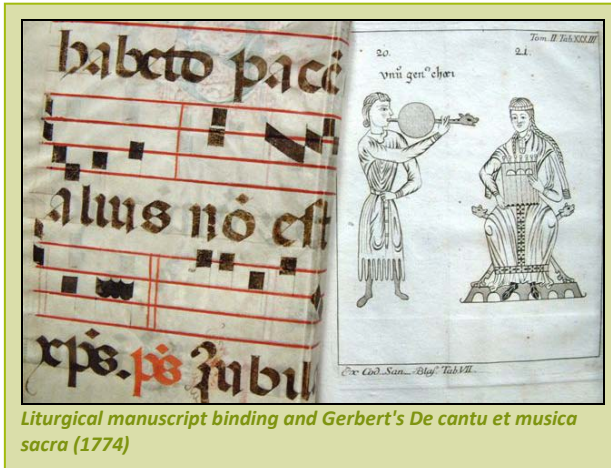
Pictured right to left at a recent visit to Hacettepe University Ankara, Turkey are Jerald Cavanagh, Institute Librarian, Limerick Institute of Technology and Pdraig Kirby, Tempus Project Coordinator/Acting Senior Library Assistant, Limerick Institute of Technology.

International Music Conference visits NUI Maynooth and Castletown House

Delegates from the 60th annual conference of the [International Association of Music Libraries](#) (IAML), hosted by Trinity College, visited the [Russell Library](#), NUI Maynooth and Castletown House on Wednesday 27th July. This was the first visit of the conference to Ireland and presented a unique opportunity for all who work with music in Irish libraries to meet colleagues from throughout Europe, North America and other parts of the world, and to learn more about current issues and trends in music librarianship.



'Bird song' from Athanasius Kircher's Musurgia Universalis (1650)



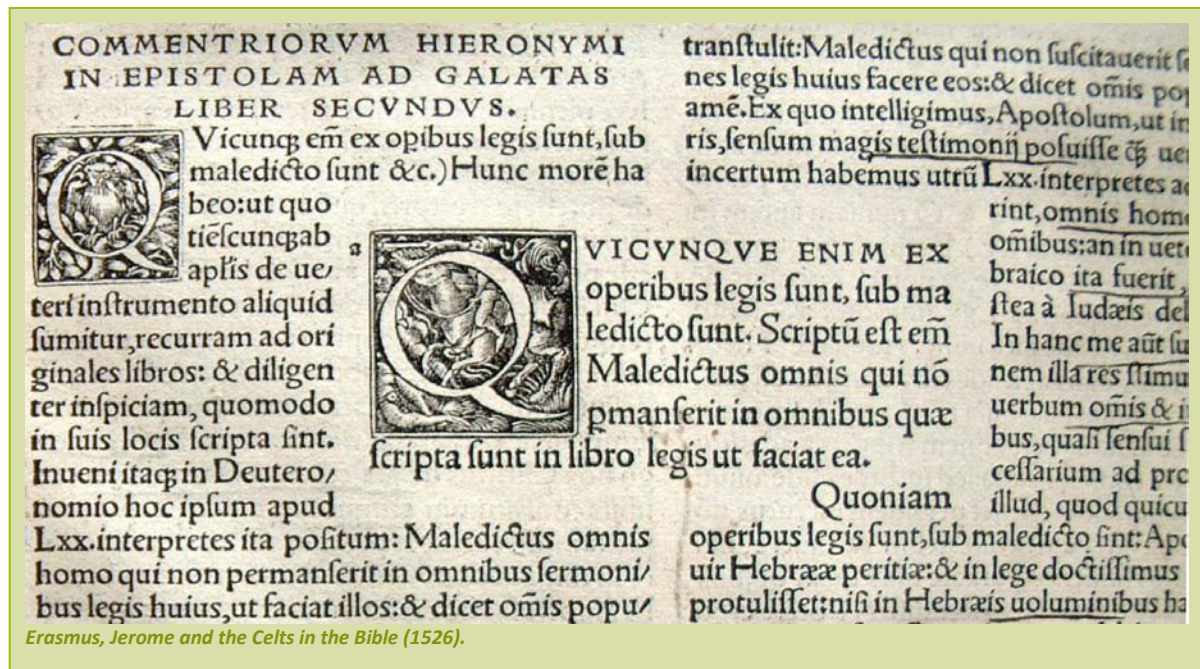
Liturgical manuscript binding and Gerbert's *De cantu et musica sacra* (1774)

After a tour of [Castletown House](#), the group visited the Russell library and were shown medieval music manuscripts, books on making musical instruments and a glimpse at Maynooth's own tradition in music.

They also had an opportunity to visit J.J. McCarthy's fine [chapel](#).

International Congress of Celtic Studies

The [Russell Library](#) at NUI Maynooth celebrated the 14th International Congress of Celtic Studies which ran from 1 – 5 August 2011, with an exhibition entitled *Celts and the Word*. A number of guided visits also took place throughout the week to showcase important early printed books and manuscripts in the internationally famous collection.



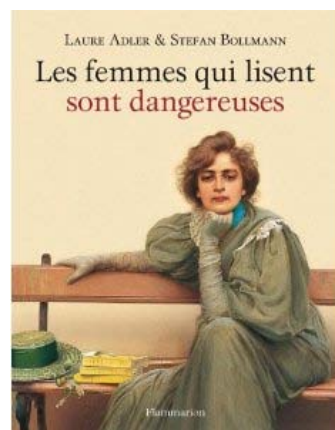
Erasmus, *Jerome and the Celts in the Bible* (1526).

The exhibition highlights Celtic peoples across ancient Europe through early maps and texts, Celts in the Bible, early Irish saints and scholars, six Celtic languages through one text, and everyday vocabulary from the past in early dictionaries and herbals. The Russell Library also holds over 300 Gaelic manuscripts from the 15th century onwards as well as a rich collection of printed texts in Irish. The exhibition is open to the public and continues into the autumn.

Percy French Summer School 2011

As the sun shone on the magnificent surroundings of Castlecoote last week for the third Percy French Summer School visitors and speakers assembled from all parts of the country to this haven of tranquillity for some cultural and historical relaxation.

The large crowds were treated each day to a wonderful array of topics and discussions from the programme. Gaye Ashford in her opening lecture entitled *Women who read are dangerous* set proceedings underway. Lively and interesting debate from a range of subjects including the in depth history and architecture of Castlecoote House by Brian O'Connell and the local history of



of Fuerty by Albert Siggins set the background and location for this years event. Dr Julie Ann Stevens presented some fascinating connections between the works of Percy French and Somerville and Ross while Patsy McGarry enthralled the audience in his lecture on *Kindly light in the works of Percy French and John Henry Newman* by offering a passionate and humorous talk in which religion, politics and entertainment were intertwined.

The stage was thereafter set for Tim Pat Coogan , Michael D Higgins and local TD Luke “Ming” Flanagan to offer their insights and reflections on the contemporary political and economic crises on the topic of *Sure we're not right Michael, Sure we're not!* The audience participation and contribution to the subsequent lengthy question and answer discussion session made for some interesting debate with recurring mantra offered by Tim Pat Coogan that “no one has gone to jail” permeated the entire and at times palpable anger among people for the ills now affecting our society and economy.



L-R. Patsy McGarry, Michael D Higgins, Tim Pat Coogan, Richie Farrell, Dr Julie Anne Stevens.

The mood was lightened by the wonderful recitals of Brian Munn, Michael Banahan & Teresa O'Donnell later that afternoon. Dr John Scally treated the audience to a captivating talk on *Finding identity in community* a subject that again in these very difficult social circumstances for all seemed to resonate very closely with people. Paul O'Kelly in his illustrated talk on Percy French and his paintings placed the work of French on a par with some of the finest painters of the era in terms of his ability to capture in the landscape the melancholy and mood of the emerging state.

In the key note address to the school Dr Padraic Conway presented a wide ranging discourse on the title *Still uncreated? Newman, Joyce and the Irish Conscience* in which the notion of conscience in terms of both a public and private issue offered some very difficult choices for the state and the individual.

The school closed with the evening concert on Friday with Bryan Hoey (tenor) and Teresa O'Donnell (harp) in which the music of Percy French once again played centre stage. The Percy French Summer School was a wonderful occasion for all involved and is now offering a very real alternative to the type and form of cultural and heritage experience for visitors to the County.

Richie Farrell
County Librarian

Roscommon County Library's Summer Events Programme

A picture paints a thousand words!! Definitely true when you see the faces of the children captured by Photographer Jenny Glynn, when they attended the Niall De Burca concert in the Quad Centre in Roscommon. This was one of the many events hosted by the Roscommon County Council Library services, for children during the month of July.



As part of the 2011 *Summer Events Programme Kids' Own* in association with the Roscommon County Council Library Services worked with children and parents from the local Brazilian community to sing, play and create.

For the past number of years Kids' Own have worked in partnership with Roscommon Library Service to provide opportunities for children to work alongside professional artists and writers to imagine and make their own books. In 2008, we published the book 'SMILE', giggles, gags and giddy tales from children in County Roscommon. We were thrilled to see

some of the parents and children joining us again for our [workshops](#) this year in the READ Centre in Roscommon.



Glynn's Photography/ Castlereagh.

This year's workshops were offered to Brazilian families' specifically parents and their early years children. The aim of the workshops was to provide space for parents and their children to play and make their own books together. Kids' Own, Artist Orla Kenny and Writer/ Musician Mary Branley led the workshops. Through art making and rhyme this work promotes and encourages family learning and literacy, encouraging parents and children to be creative, confident and fluent in their first language. Kids' Own are a national children's arts organisation and publishing house.

It is hoped to continue and develop this partnership with Roscommon Library Service to provide holistic, authentic arts experiences that seek to nurture and support children's creativity, imagination and resilience throughout the County of Roscommon.

*Orla Kenny: Creative Director, Kids Own Publishing Partnership
Richie Farrell, County Librarian, Roscommon County Council.*

September means History and Heritage at South Dublin Libraries

There is something for everyone during *History and Heritage Month* at South Dublin Libraries, as once again a varied and interesting programme reflects the rich heritage of the County.

As 2011 is the *Year of Craft*, there are plenty of opportunities to try a hand at some of our traditional crafts like basket making, crochet, felt making or patchwork at the County Library, Clondalkin Library or Lucan Library.

The County Library in Tallaght presents: *T.J. Byrne 1876-1939 – Library Architect: An exhibition detailing the work of T.J. Byrne, Library Architect*, in

celebration of the centenary of Clondalkin and Whitechurch Libraries. Michael Fewer, architect and writer, will also give a talk on T.J. Byrne at the County Library on Monday August 22 at 7:00 p.m.

For children aged 9 to 12, Castletymon, County and Clondalkin Libraries present *Irish History Live* - take a journey through the myriad of Irish history. Wear the armour, wield the sword, understand the time, enjoy the experience!

For those interested in Family History, there is a Genealogy Workshop at Clondalkin Library on August 27. There are also Local History and Genealogy Online Workshops in Lucan Library on August 29 and September 19. Archivist Damien Burke will give a talk on *Caring for your Family Papers* at the County Library on Saturday August 27.

Get into the great outdoors with guided walks of the Bohernabreena Reservoir, the Glenasmole Valley and historic Saggart Village.

A wonderful addition to the programme is the Luas to Saggart Exhibition of Heritage Information at Belgard, Fettercairn, Cheeverstown, Citywest Campus, Fortunestown and Saggart Luas stops, at the County Library, Tallaght and on www.luas.ie. This was a collaborative project between South Dublin Libraries and the Railway Procurement Agency.

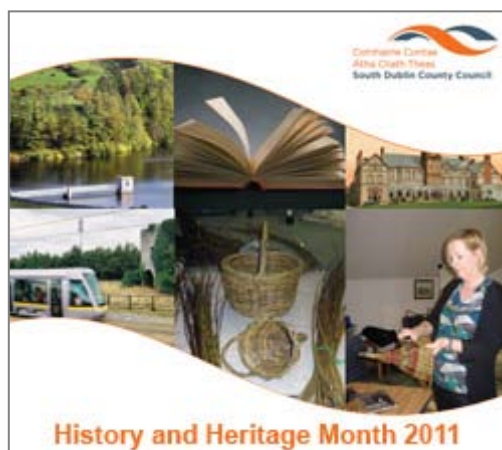
For more information on History and Heritage Month at South Dublin Libraries go to www.southdublinlibraries.ie.

Track into History: County Library launches exhibition on heritage of areas of interest along Saggart Luas extension

To tie in with *Heritage Week*, South Dublin Libraries collaborated with Luas to mount an exhibition of six posters about local history at each of the stations along the new Luas Citywest extension. The posters were put on display for the month of August, and could also be seen in the County Library, Tallaght.

The posters were researched and written by a team of local history researchers from South Dublin Libraries and archaeologists from the Railway Procurement Agency, the body responsible for light rail in Dublin.

The posters focus on historic themes connected to the stops along the line, looking at the airfields at Belgard and Baldonnell, the castles and tower houses in the Fettercairn area, soccer in Tallaght, industry in Tallaght and Saggart, the Dublin and Blessington Steam Tram, and the early Christian origins of Saggart.



The aviation poster looks at the Royal Air Force airbase, opened in 1918 on the Belgard Road in Tallaght, which was used for pilot training. During the Second World War, the German Luftwaffe marked the airfield on an aerial photo of Tallaght. The poster also tells the story of the flight taken by Douglas 'Wrong Way' Corrigan, who landed in Baldonnel in 1938, claiming to have got lost on his trip between New York and California.

Another poster looks at soccer in the area, focusing on local heroes Robbie Keane, Richard Dunne and Keith Fahey, and telling the story of Shamrock Rovers' triumphant move to Tallaght.

To complement the exhibition, a free heritage walk through Saggart was organised for Saturday August 20, and participants received free Luas tickets to get them to the walk's starting point at Saggart Luas station.

In creating these posters, researchers were able to draw on the large archive of pictures and texts held by the Local Studies section of South Dublin Libraries, much of which can be seen on the library's website. The posters are available to view online at <http://www.southdublinlibraries.ie/local-studies/resources/luas-saggart-heritage-exhibition>

Summer Sessions at Ardkeen Library



Summer Sessions are a series of talks on alternative therapies which are held each year at [Ardkeen Library](#) during the summer months. This year there have been talks on *Mindfulness* with Leónie Baldwin, *Hypnotherapy* with Trevor Eivers, National Guild of Hypnotists, and *SQ Wellness* with practitioner Eileen Power. The attendance has been very good at these events with lots of interest and questions. The final information talk on Saturday August 27th was called *Looking after your Mental Health* and was given by a volunteer from a mental health charity.



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2011 has been designated European Year of Volunteering.