

Director of An Chomhairle retires

Norma McDermott retired from the post of Director of An Chomhairle on 29th February 2012.

Mr Mark Dearey, Chairman of An Chomhairle, writes:

Norma McDermott joined An Chomhairle on 8th October 1984 as Librarian, having begun her career in libraries with the Tipperary Joint Libraries Committee.

Less than a year later, in June 1985, Norma was appointed the first Assistant Director of An Chomhairle, and she was appointed Director in 1993, following the retirement of Tom Armitage.



Director, Norma McDermott

During Norma's years as Director remarkable changes have taken place in the Irish public library system. We now have a library service with buildings and services which are among the best, and this has been achieved in large measure due to the *Branching Out* programme, launched in 1998. Norma played a key role in the drafting of the *Branching Out* report, and her influence can be seen throughout the document. Her contribution was crucial to the success of the Branching Out strategy through her professionalism, determination, tenacity and sheer force of character.

Norma has always been respectful of, indeed she has promoted, the primacy of the local authority in the delivery of the library service. Her recommendations about the very many projects which came before An Chomhairle were based on what would deliver the best result for the library service and, of course, for the library user.

One of Norma's first responsibilities as librarian in An Chomhairle was for COLICO, and her commitment to COLICO and to library co-operation generally has been unwavering. She oversaw the drafting and publication of the first national cross-sectoral policy document on library co-operation in Ireland, *Joining Forces*, published by An Chomhairle in 1999. Norma developed close working relationships with colleagues in Northern Ireland, in Great Britain, and in Europe and she was not only a great ambassador for An Chomhairle, but a great ambassador for Irish libraries.

It is impossible to do justice to such a remarkable career in a few words but, fortunately, Norma's legacy to Irish libraries and librarianship is self-evident. Her influence was immense, and her legacy will be enduring.

I know I speak for each of the four Chairmen with whom Norma has served as Director that we could not have wished for a public servant with more integrity, honesty and soundness of judgement.

Norma is only the third holder of the office of Director of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna: she has performed that role with distinction and it has been an honour to Chair an organisation which she has led with such professionalism and integrity.

Mark Dearey, Chairman, March 2012

A New chapter for Irish Library News

In September 1977 Irish Library News (ISSN 0332-0049) rolled off the presses for the first time. Over its thirty-five year history, Irish Library News has recorded all the major developments in the Irish library world. In its 320 issues one can read of the opening of new libraries, the appointment and retirement of staff, the many pilot projects, the many exciting new services, and countless reading events in libraries around the country.



Issue 321 will be the last as a standalone publication. From May 2012, Irish Library News will be available on www.library.ie as an online news and events service.

An email alert will be circulated when the new service becomes available. In the meantime, news items can be emailed to Ruth Collier, at rcollier@librarycouncil.ie.

Since its first issue in 1977 Irish Library News has played an important role in the world of Irish libraries, and great credit is due to the many staff in An Chomhairle who worked on it over the years, including Alun Bevan, Brendan Teeling and Niamh McNamara.

Irish Library News has received great support from the library community over the years and we wish to thank our many contributors and all our readers.

LGMA Libraries Development

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna has confirmed that a new business function, *Libraries Development* is being established within the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) which will continue the functions and work of An Chomhairle.

Among the services which will continue, are: the FÁS elearning at the Library programme; the Public Library Staff Training and Development Programme; the Children's and Young People Working Group; Borrowbooks.ie; Askaboutireland.ie; the collation of public library statistics; Irish Library News; librarybuildings.ie, and the PLR scheme.

Libraries Development will be staffed by a team of five staff from An Chomhairle, under the leadership of Acting Director Annette Kelly.

Contact details for the team remain as they are until further notice.

Report published on library authority budgets for 2012

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna is pleased to publish the summary of the twenty fifth national annual statistical survey of public library authority budgets for the year 2012 based on the returns provided by all 32 library authorities.

The main features of the 2012 survey are that:

- Local authorities estimate that they will invest **€136,986,763** of their revenue budgets on public library services in 2012. This represents a decrease of **2.6%** on the 2011 figure of **€140,600,898**.
- **Nine** public library authorities have budgeted to spend more than in 2011 and **twenty-three** public library authorities have budgeted to spend less than in 2011.
- Total public library spending is down by **2.6%** over the same period.
- Total local authority expenditure on library stock is set to decrease by **12.1%** on the 2011 figure.



The **2.6%** decrease in expenditure takes place in the context of a **4.8%** decrease in local authority recurrent expenditure on all services, including libraries.

Service indicators for recent years show that the number of visits to public libraries continues to grow. In this context, there is a danger that reduced funding for stock will make it more difficult for library services to meet the increased demand. It is crucial that funding for stock be protected so that library authorities can provide optimum value to the people, both young and old, whom they serve.

The full report can be downloaded from <http://www.librarycouncil.ie/publications/statistics/>

Ghost Light tops the most-borrowed chart for 2011

Joseph O'Connor's *Ghost Light* was the most borrowed book in Irish public libraries in 2011, according to figures published by the Library Council (2nd March).



Luach Saothair ó Iasachtaí leis an bPobal
Public Lending Remuneration

The lending figures also show that it's not all about computer games and TV for Irish children as reading continues to be one of their favourite pastimes.

Children's authors once again dominated the 'most-borrowed-from-the-library' lists in Ireland's 350 public libraries in 2011.

Eight children's authors made it into the top ten 'most-borrowed-from-the-library' list for last year, with **Roderick Hunt**, author of over 300 titles in the Oxford Reading Tree series, the most popular for the third successive year with over 125,000 library loans.

Classic stories continue to delight today's children with stars such as Enid Blyton, Roger Hargreaves and Roald Dahl in the top ten, alongside Daisy Meadows, Francesca Simon, and Jacqueline Wilson. Adam Blade, author of 60 books in the [Beast Quest](#) fantasy series, entered the top 10 for the first time.

Prolific US writer James Patterson is the most popular adult fiction author for the second successive year with almost 74,000 library loans. Another American favourite, Nora Roberts, who also writes as J.D. Robb, is the second most-borrowed general fiction author with over 54,000 loans.

Irish writers and illustrators, both children's and adult, are attracting lots of Irish readers, with 15 featuring in the top 100.

[Darren Shan](#), author of horror and fantasy books which have sold close to 15 million copies worldwide, is the most popular Irish author for the third year running.

Joseph O'Connor's *Ghost Light*, Dublin City's ['One City One Book'](#) for 2011, was the nation's most borrowed book last year.

Reacting to the news, [Mr O'Connor](#) said:

"I'm deeply honoured that Ghost Light is the most borrowed book of 2011, and I offer a heartfelt thanks to my readers for making it so. All my life since childhood I have been a lover of our libraries. My novels have been researched in them, and I have many times been the beneficiary of the exceptional professionalism and helpfulness of our librarians. Now more than ever, I am proud to support the libraries and the wonderful work they do for their communities up and down the land."

Fiction continues to dominate and works by Irish authors are very popular, with 34 making it into the top 100. *Room*, the international bestseller and award-winning novel by Emma Donoghue is the second most borrowed fiction book by an Irish author.

The lists are compiled by The Library Council from information supplied to the [Public Lending Remuneration](#) (PLR) Scheme by all public libraries in Ireland.



Joseph O'Connor, author of Ghost Light

10,229 authors resident in thirty-six countries were registered for Irish PLR in 2011. €179,047.46 was paid out to 4,047 authors in respect of their total library loans. Twelve authors received the maximum payment of €1,000, and the rate-per-loan was 5.21 cent.

Commenting on the third year of PLR, Mark Dearey, Chairman of The Library Council, thanked the country's librarians for their co-operation in the scheme:

"Irish public libraries are becoming even more popular each year as the 17 million visits and 15 million books borrowed show. Public library staff around the country should be very proud of the service they provide."

PLR is funded by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

250 children participate in National Engineers Week across Carlow Library Service

Over 250 children between 10 and 12 years of age attended a range of events hosted by Carlow Library Service as part of National Engineers Week. Engineers Week is a week long programme of nationwide events with the aim of celebrating the world of engineering in Ireland. The theme for

Engineers Week 2012 was “Connecting Our Lives” and Carlow Library Service hosted 6 events as part of this theme.

Lecturers from the Institute of Technology, Carlow visited Carlow Central Library and Tullow library and covered a range of areas.

Mechanical Engineering lecturer, Joe Dillane visited Tullow library and provided a highly entertaining and informative talk on water – its source, supply and use. Over 100 children attended this event in Tullow library.

Electronic Engineering lecturer, Michael Mahon delivered a talk on the future of Electrical and Electronic Engineering while Mechanical Engineering lecturer, Andrew Keppel talked to the



Andrew Keppel from Carlow IT lectures on Rollercoasters and other aspects of engineering to students of Gaelscoil Eoghain Ui Thuairisc.

children about the importance of mechanical design. Both lecturers incorporated video footage and practical experiments as part of their session and enthralled the children who asked numerous questions on all areas of engineering.

County Librarian, Josephine Coyne is delighted that Carlow Library Service is involved in this programme which provides an opportunity for primary school children to develop a positive awareness about the engineering profession and show young people the potential that a career in engineering offers.

This is the sixth successive year of these events and the programme is a key element of the National *Discover Science & Engineering* programme supported by Engineers Ireland and the Department of Education: Science, Forfás and a number of major engineering employers.

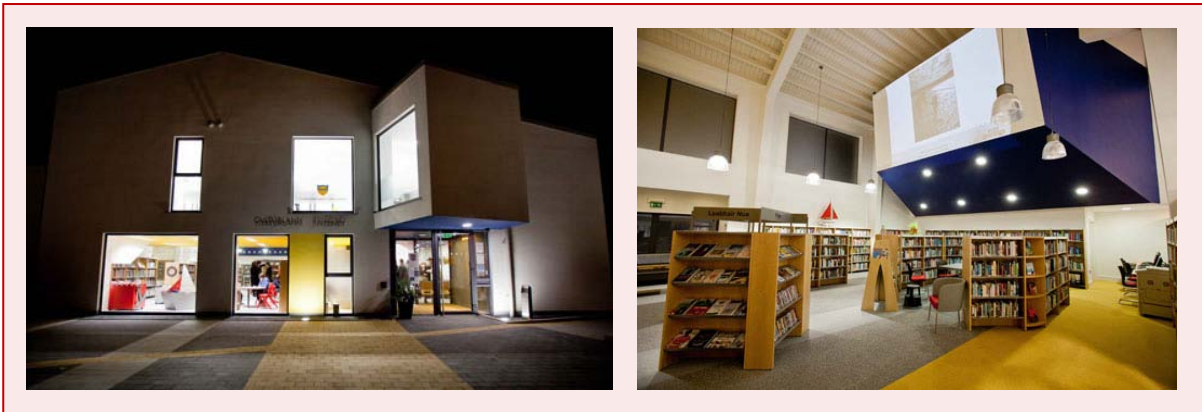
Membership of Carlow Library Service is free for children and there are a range of facilities and services available to all age groups.

Check out www.carlowlibraries.ie, www.engineersweek.ie or contact (059) 9129700 for more details.

Minister Officially Opens €1.6M Cultúrlann Sweeney in Kilkee

The €1.6m redevelopment of a 1950s public library building in Kilkee has resulted in the delivery of West Clare's foremost cultural and library facility. That's according to Mayor of Clare Cllr. Pat Hayes who joined Mr. Jimmy Deenihan, T.D. Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, in officially opening Cultúrlann Sweeney at O'Connell Street, Kilkee on 27 February 2012.

The 8,299 sq-ft development, which is almost double the size of the original Sweeney Memorial Public Library, comprises additional library space, theatre and exhibition space, and multi-functional spaces.



The new theatre and foyer/gallery facilities have been designed to accommodate approximately 110 people, while the number of books in the library stock exceeds 12,500.

The project was funded by Clare County Council, in association with the Charitable Commissioners of Ireland, as well as the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

Speaking at the official opening ceremony, Minister Deenihan paid tribute to the project construction and design team which he said had contributed to the further enhancement of the range of services now being provided by Clare County Library and the Clare Arts Office.

Mayor of Clare Cllr Pat Hayes said: *"The official opening of Cultúrlann Sweeney represents the completion of one of the biggest infrastructure projects to be undertaken in the West Clare area in recent years. The facility will greatly enhance the social infrastructure of the area and will help the future development of Kilkee and its environs."*

Helen Walsh, County Librarian thanked the public *"for their patience and understanding during the redevelopment process"*.

"The project has led to an improvement in the standard and range of independent functions within the building, allowing for different activities to occur independently. This new facility will play an important public and social role within the town", she added.

The Sweeney Memorial Library building dates to the 1950s and was designed to provide a range of functions, including a library, a theatre, a cinema, and a dance-hall and lecture room.

The library service was temporarily relocated to Kilkee Community Centre during construction, which commenced in January 2011.

Clare County Library's branches emerging as Facebook favourites

Children's Books Ireland has been running a library of the month competition on their Facebook page since early January and already four branches of Clare County Library have been nominated. They are De Valera Public Library, Ennis; Kilfinaghty Public Library, Sixmilebridge; Kilrush Public Library and Lisdoonvarna Public Library. Sixmilebridge Library emerged as clear winner of the competition for January and Lisdoonvarna Library won in February. Praise indeed for these regional branches of the Clare Library service!

As part of this competition Children's Books Ireland are asking people to nominate their favourite local library on the CBI [Facebook page](#). They want people to do this by 'liking' the CBI Facebook page, sharing a photo of the library in question and telling them briefly why it's so special. At the end of each month the top three nominated libraries go head to head in a vote for the eventual winner. CBI will donate a special book to the winning library each month.

Lisdoonvarna is a small, but busy, part-time branch. Phoebe Moore stated when nominating Lisdoonvarna, "Not only is it a cute building but the librarian is really helpful. I wish it was open every day!", while fellow nominator,

Gertrude Formica, said, "I love Lisdoonvarna Library. Pretty, pretty location and the librarian is so lovely. Love it there!"



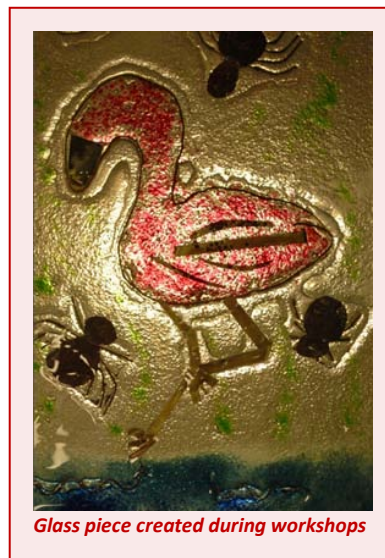
Lisdoonvarna Library – February winner of CBI's Facebook competition.

Clare County Library is delighted with all its nominations to date and proud to acknowledge that two of their branches have emerged as winners in this wonderful initiative by Children's Books Ireland. The library is encouraging anyone with a Facebook account to visit the CBI page and engage in the fun. They are also promoting the competition in branches around the county and on their own Facebook page, a link to which can be found on their homepage at www.clarelibrary.ie. Photos to accompany the nominations for branches of Clare Library can be gotten on their website by visiting the 'Branch Libraries' link on the homepage of their website. They wish all libraries across the country luck with the competition but are determined to continue their winning streak in the coming months!

Cork County Library gets crafty!

During Year of Craft 2011, Cork County Library & Arts Service commissioned a number of artists to create unique craft pieces in collaboration with librarians and users in a number of branch libraries around the county. Recently two of these pieces were launched in West Cork, at Bantry and Skibbereen libraries.

In **Bantry Library**, [Brilliant Glass](#) is four pieces of fused glass created by local children at two workshops held in the library with artists Marie Brett and Michael Ray. The pieces are based on drawings and ideas from the children springing from characters and scenes in Roddy Doyle's short work Brilliant. The glass is an attractive addition to the children's area in Bantry which is an intrinsic part of the workshops and readings for children and adults during the annual [West Cork Literary Festival](#) each July.



In **Skibbereen Library** a storyteller's chair has been created by children from Abbeystrewry National School with local craftspeople [Alison Ospina](#). The children during workshops with Alison created a greenwood chair using ideas from the children and their inspired directions on how it might be designed. Alison and the children also created an original storybook based around the chair itself. A hand-bound copy will be on display in the library and will be available for parents, grandparents and anyone else who wants to spin a yarn to their child. Printed copies of the book were also produced. The first of many storytelling sessions involving the storyteller's chair is

being held as part of the [Choowawaa!](#) arts event for children.

Cork hosts Indexing, an exhibition on Sherkin Island

During the month of February 2012, Cork County Library and Arts Service hosted an exhibition with a difference. *Indexing*, an exhibition by students of BAVA on Sherkin Island, featured thirteen video art pieces, from thirty-seven seconds to seven minutes in length. The exhibition was launched by the Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr Tim Lombard, on February 3. Also in attendance were the Cork County Manager, the Director of Services, members of the Library Committee, representatives from the DIT, the West Cork Arts Centre, the Sherkin Island Development Society, the Irish Museum of Modern Art and most importantly, the artists themselves, who travelled up from West Cork for the event.

The BA in Visual Art is an innovative honours degree programme delivered on Sherkin Island by Dublin Institute of Technology in collaboration with Sherkin Island Development Society and the West Cork Arts Centre.

The students were particularly pleased with the exhibition space at the County Library HQ, many expressing the view that their work looked and sounded better there than

they had ever seen it look or sound before. The exhibition was evocative and inspiring, and in many cases, showed how much fun art can be.



Dublin City's customer focused response to unemployment

With rising unemployed figures and global economic uncertainty, Dublin City's Central Library has designed a *Career Direction & Development Programme*, a series of free lectures, interactive workshops, and helpdesks from relevant government agencies, together with user education programmes and thematic information displays, all designed specifically for the unemployed. The programme's main aim is to provide free support to anyone, graduate or non-graduate, with professional expertise in sourcing and/or sustaining employment in challenging times. Additional aims include the provision of continuing education opportunities, volunteering positions and engagement with government certified initiatives, such as *Springboard*, *WebElevate* and *Get Ireland Online*. The Careers Programme has recorded 2,029 participants since its inception, with 910 attending lectures/workshops, 827 availing of assistance on offer at helpdesks and 292 participating in the user education programmes.



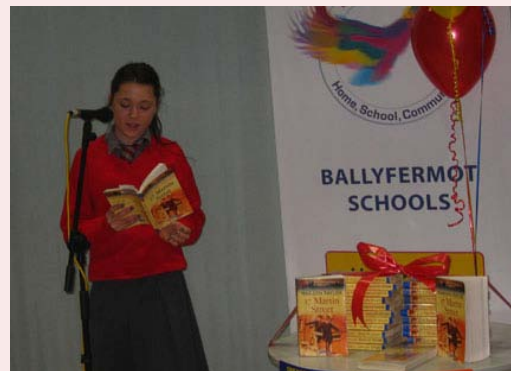
This initiative complements an existing successful biannual *Start Your Own Business Programme* of free lectures, in association with Dublin City Enterprise Board. In 2011, a record number of 582 aspiring entrepreneurs attended the programmed events. This year's programme, which gets underway in April, will concentrate on innovative ways to overcome some of the challenges of starting a business in a recession while helping to turn ideas into new products and services.

Both programmes work well together and participants' testimonials are appreciative and encouraging: *'lots of tips, excellent speakers, well worth coming, thanks very much'; 'I attended a free talk given by Declan Farrell in the ILAC library a few days before an interview. I found it very helpful. I'm happy to say that I got positive news today from the interviewers and start my new job on the 27th. Many thanks again'*.

One Book One Ballyfermot - 2012

Between February 20 and March 30 the Ballyfermot reading initiative, *One Book One Ballyfermot*, is taking place. This is the third year of the literacy programme and the second year that it has included all the schools in the Ballyfermot area, as well as the Ballyfermot library and a host of community groups, parents, and of course the students themselves.

The reading drive was launched in The Base when a selection of students from the participating schools met to celebrate their reading of two books, Michael Morpurgo's *Kaspar Prince of Cats* and Marilyn Taylor's *17 Martin Street*. Students from primary and post-primary read excerpts from the books and two students even gave a short account of the history of the Titanic, as it features in the novel *Kaspar*.



Student from class Oak Kylemore College, reads an excerpt from 17 Martin Street.



Joseph Peelo cuts the ribbon

The event was launched by the Kylemore College JCSP Librarian, Joseph Peelo, who spoke about the link between reading and success, and the importance of imagination in people's daily and working lives. The JCSP, or Junior Certificate Schools Programme, sponsors the Outreach through its JCSP Library in Kylemore College. The library links with the HSCL, Home School Community Liaison, and the School Completion Officer in the local schools, and the energy and drive of the HSCL's and the participating teachers is vital to the success of the programme. The involvement of local community groups and parents makes it a truly community literacy event.

The closing ceremony will take place on March 29th when it is hoped the author Marilyn Taylor will visit our display of art work and literary reviews with which we will celebrate our reading in the previous month.

One Book One Ballyfermot is a joint JCSP Library and HSCL Ballyfermot Schools initiative, widely supported by community groups and the local Ballyfermot public library.

Can teenagers and senior citizens get along in the library?

In a new collection of essays entitled *Partnerships and Collaborations in Public Library Communities: Resources and Solutions*, Susan Lovatt, a librarian in Fingal County Libraries' Malahide branch, demonstrates how these two groups can work together in a mutually beneficial way. In her essay *Cross – Generational Learning Case Study: A Working Partnership between Malahide Library and Malahide (Post-Primary) Community School* Susan describes how Transition Year students from the local community school pass on their technology skills



Students pass on their IT skill to senior citizens in Malahide Library

to senior citizens in the library. The TY students benefited by developing their communication and teaching skills and the senior citizens benefited by acquiring I.T. and Internet skills through this one to one coaching method.

However these two groups were not the only beneficiaries as the library also gained from this collaboration by having the technology needs of its members met by these young volunteer coaches. This partnership in Malahide Library is an innovative example of how a library and the local community can work together successfully and a resounding *yes!* to the question of whether teenagers and seniors citizens can get on together.

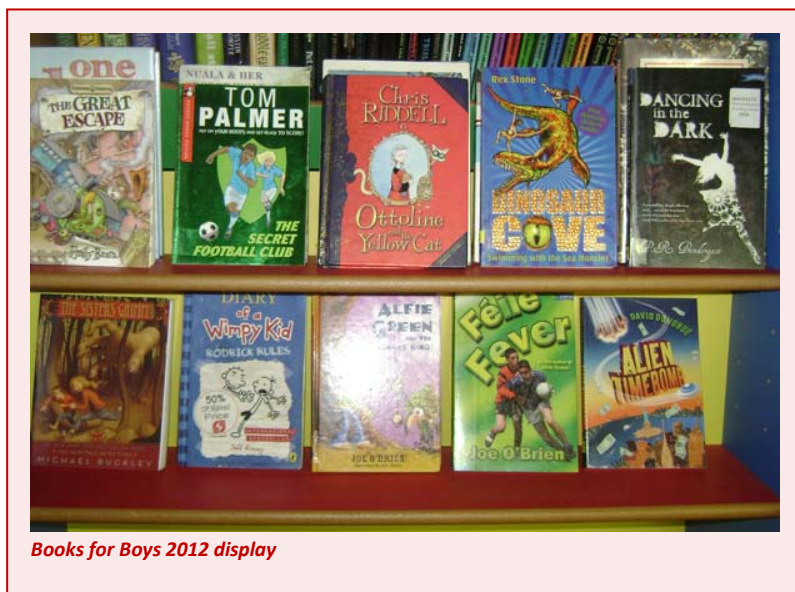
News from Kilkenny Libraries

Books for Boys @ Loughboy Library

Question: Who are the best people to choose books for 10-12 year olds? Answer: 10-12 year olds themselves!

With this in mind library staff decided to work with the boys from CBS 6th class, Kilkenny and now a new collection of books chosen by them is on display at Loughboy Library.

With the support of their teacher, Mr. Tom Cunniffe, they read and reviewed a large selection of novels including old favourites, Irish writers and new popular series.



Not all the books made the cut. The collection only includes those which received a score of 8 plus and features The Sisters Grimm series by Michael Buckley, One Dog and His Boy by Eva Ibbotson and Dirty Bertie Mud by David Roberts.

Sports stories ranked among the favourites-Jamie Malone loved Feile Fever by Joe O'Brien, Kick- Off by Dan Freedman was highly recommended by Daniel Docherty and Football Academy by Tom Palmer got full marks from Stephen Holden.

Each reader completed a review slip detailing the story plot and their favourite part of the book-these are available with the collection at Loughboy Library and will be invaluable to other young readers.

David Buckley recommends Nuala and her Secret Wolf by Cora Harrison to all animal lovers like himself, Sean Devane thinks Alien Timebomb by David Donohue is great for average readers and there are lots of drama, comedy and twists in Once I Caught a Fish Alive by Louise Cooper according to Conor Deegan.

The boys are currently reading "Reaching the Heights" by Peter Gunning with Mr. Cunniffe as a class reader and give it top marks-this is a fast moving story of how three young teenagers tackle all obstacles in life with courage, ingenuity and humour. This book is also available at the library.

Classes and solo readers are encouraged to check out this great collection.

Loughboy Library extends a sincere thanks to Mr Cunniffe and his class for all their cooperation and hard work.

Castlecomer Library on NBC TV in USA and RTE

A segment for NBC TV in America, for the coverage of the New York St Patrick's Day Parade, was filmed in Castlecomer library recently. Helen Kelly, the resident genealogist in The Shelbourne Hotel, was interviewed by Michael Mathis of NBC for over an hour in the library on the story of a local family she has traced – The Comerford Family who emigrated to Pennsylvania in the 1860's. Helen informed library staff that Frank Comerford is now the head of NBC, so she was probably tracing his own family. Helen was also filmed using the Internet to access genealogical records.



Helen Kelly in Castlecomer library for the interview with NBC

Helen McInerney, from RTE, recently interviewed Kilkenny author Jim Maher for Nationwide. Filming took place in the Local Studies Department of KLS. The author used the Local Studies when researching his recent publication called *The Oath is dead and gone*. This Irish history book is based on the obligation that was in place for all elected representatives to swear allegiance to the British monarchy and its impact on this country's political development. Declan Macauley, Executive Librarian, Local Studies, spoke about the facilities available through the Local Studies Department. The programme was broadcast on 5th March and is available on Player.

Bookclub newsletter in Kilkenny

Kilkenny Library Service published a Bookclub Newsletter recently. It was distributed to the 5 clubs within the service and was also sent to bookclubs around the county.



Items covered in the newsletter included an introduction to the most recent club which is based in the City library, a note on the Ennis Bookclub festival, some new titles in stock and 2 reviews of fiction. Attention was drawn to World Book Day, the library Facebook page and the titles that will be read at the library bookclubs in the near future.

Seachtain na Gaeilge @ Portlaoise Library

Irish lovers from Ballyroan to Alaska flocked to Portlaoise Library during Seachtain na Gaeilge for this year's *Evening Of Irish Music, Poetry and Dance*. Riverdance became a dim and distant memory as young students from the Garbriel Lynam School of Dance took to the boards in the library. The cultural feast was continued by students from the Gael Scoil who not only sang all the old favourites 'as Gaeilge but also treated visitors to translations of their



favourite pop songs. The poetic contribution by the library's own Ciorcal Comhrá ranged from the nostalgic to the hilarious and local poet John Hayden recited 'Cengail Mac Crimmon' which tells the story of Owey Macrory O'Moore defeating the English at the Battle of Stradbally Bridge in 1596. Finally a wonderful evening was topped off by the toe tapping Comhltas tunes and everyone enjoyed browsing the wonderful ICA Craft Exhibition and Irish books for all levels and ages over the 'cupán tae'.

The fun also included *Bingo as Gaeilge* and a fascinating talk by Tom Cox from Abbeyleix Heritage Centre on the *Placenames of Laois and their Irish Origins*.

Mountmellick Library hosts workshops with Artist Tomás O' Maoldomhnaigh

Artist Tomás O' Maoldomhnaigh recently provided art workshops for school children at Mountmellick Library in County Laois. Tomás's work is currently on display at the art gallery in the library. During the hour-long workshops he talked about the exhibition and described how he approaches his work and about his inspirations. He illustrated his talk with demonstrations of his drawing techniques and he instructed the children on how to draw horses and landscapes.

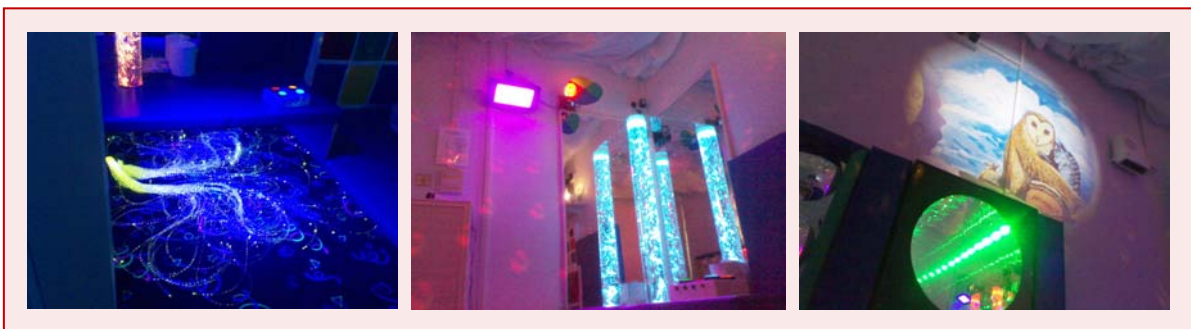
Born in Limerick, Tomás, has been a professional portrait and landscape artist for many years. His works can be found all over Ireland and is represented on the walls of many of Ireland's top corporate companies. He exhibits on an on-going basis in the Mid West.

His most recent exhibition 'Free Spirit' was on show at Mountmellick Art Gallery during February.



New Sensory Room for Mohill Branch Library.

A new Sensory Room in Mohill Library was officially opened on Thursday 1st December 2011, as part of Leitrim County Council's activities for National Accessibility week. Speaking at the opening, Jackie Maguire, Leitrim County Manager, said he was pleased to see that the library service continued to provide a service which does not always stick to the traditional book-lending service. Cllr John McTiernan, Chairman of Leitrim County Council, officially opening the room, remarked that it will be a great asset to have this service available at times suitable for parents and it will assist with better integration for children and adults with disabilities.



The sensory Room will be available for parents and carers of children with delayed development. It is equipped to assist children through play to develop and reach their full potential. There are various

items in the room which can assist a parent or carer to fine tune a child's coordination, sequencing, body awareness, visual stimulation, colour matching, cause and effect, counting, tactile abilities and so on. It can also be used to calm and relax a child. It takes the notion of disability out of the medical environment and puts it into a learning one. Leitrim County library expects that children using the sensory room will have the best chance to reach their full potential and will carry on being great library users.

Sean OSuilleabhain retires as Leitrim County Librarian.



Sean OSuilleabhain (centre front row) with staff in Ballinamore on his last day in the library service.

On January 23 2012, Sean OSuilleabhain retired as Leitrim County Librarian after 33 years in Leitrim and 44 years public service.

Sean developed the library service in Leitrim to a very high standard, with nine branch libraries, an extensive local history section, and a genealogy centre. His love of all things Irish motivated him to innovate many unique history and genealogy projects and to develop the Irish language in Leitrim.

James Clyde and the Diamonds of Orchestra Book Launch in Monaghan Library

Local author Colm McElwain launched his new book *James Clyde and the Diamonds of Orchestra* in Monaghan Branch Library on Wednesday 29 Feb. There was a very large attendance and the event was a huge success.

Colm spoke to his many fans and signed copies of his book on the night. James Clyde is the most requested title in Monaghan libraries at the moment so if you haven't checked it out don't miss out. Colm is inspired by a number of authors, including J. K. Rowling, C. S. Lewis, Brian Keane and Charles Dickens.



Staff of Monaghan County Libraries with Colm Mc Elwain, at the Launch of James Clyde and the Diamonds of Orchestra.

The Staff at Monaghan County Library were privileged to host the launch and wish to congratulate Colm and wish him every success with his book.

Check out James Clyde on Face book and www.jamesclydebook.com

Xin Nian Kuai Le, or... Happy New Year!

The fiery year of the Dragon 2012 was celebrated with noise, colour and the best of Irish and Chinese cultural traditions on Thursday 26 January 2012 at the South Dublin County Library Tallaght.

This inaugural celebration was a collaboration between South Dublin County Libraries and the Institute of Technology Dublin (ITT Dublin). ITT Dublin has developed a close working relationship with Nanjing University of Technology in China and this year welcomed 60 students to study at ITT for their fourth year. The students are required to live in Tallaght while attending ITT, making a welcome boost to the local economy. ITT predict this figure to double next year with increasing numbers of Chinese students applying to study in Tallaght.

County Library Tallaght's Chinese New Year celebration began in the morning with Chinese arts and crafts sessions and Chinese and Irish Traditional Stories for invited school groups. A Chinese Cookery Demonstration in the early afternoon was well attended and Chinese food provided over the course of the evening was devoured with gusto!

The evening spectacular began with an enthralling Lion Dance accompanied by live drummers by members of the Chinese Irish Cultural



The celebrations at County Library, Tallaght

Academy – a feast of noise and colour which thrilled adults and children alike. Chinese and Irish traditional stories followed with master storyteller Seosamh O’Maolalai, before a young troupe of Irish dancers performed a truly wonderful routine wearing a selection of beautiful Irish dancing costumes. Other music adding to the spirit of the evening included traditional Chinese Gu Zheng music and traditional Irish musicians Aoife Desmond and friends. A charming addition to the evening was two young Chinese boys performing Irish music on the recorder.

The Chinese and Irish Cultural celebration was enjoyed enormously by members of the public (Irish and Chinese) and the Chinese students from ITT who attended the event. The students were truly impressed with the County Library Tallaght and the wealth of free resources on offer. A video of the evening can be viewed here <http://vimeo.com/36099309>.

South Dublin Libraries Rewind

South Dublin Libraries’ Local Studies Team has begun a new partnership called **Rewind** with the *Tallaght Echo* supplying articles, photos and facts about the history of South Dublin County for the paper’s weekly local history page. This dedicated page also serves to highlight the local studies services provided by South Dublin Libraries.

The articles focus on everything from village histories to famous natives and residents, industry to folklore and military history to the histories of local schools. Articles are written by library staff and images are provided from South Dublin Libraries’ collections. A recent page featured South Dublin County’s links to the Easter Rising, and provided a platform for the search for memorabilia which will be photographed and added to *Source*, South Dublin’s digitized data collection.



It is hoped to get local historians and local history societies involved in providing content as well. As well as promoting the history and heritage of the county, *Rewind* is proving to be a great tool for South Dublin Libraries to promote its Local Studies services and events.

Remembering the 1911 Wexford Lock-Out

Wexford's 1911 Lock-Out commemorations were centered on two weeks spanning late January and early February 2012 when the Lock-Out crisis there, which had started in August 1911, had peaked and a resolution found.

The library contribution to the programme included *The 1911 Lock Out Exhibition of local memorabilia* in Wexford Town Library for the fortnight, support for the publication of *Richard Corish – a biography*, by Kieran Roche [ISBN: 9781908817464], contribution to the seminar, *Wexford Foundry Workers – Men of Iron* on Saturday, 4th February and to the entertainment, *1911 Through Drama and Music*, that told the story of Wexford one hundred years ago. Local author Vonnice

Banville Evans read from her recent book, *What the Green Rushes Whisper*, a novel set in Wexford at that time. For children, Brian Gallagher read from his novel, set during the 1913 Dublin Lock-Out, *Across the Divide*. Throughout 2011, the oral history programme focused on recording the memories of senior citizens whose parents had been heavily involved in the struggle. Those recordings are at <http://www.wexford.ie/wex/Departments/Library/OralHistoryPodcasts/>

More information on the programme in general from Nicola.McGrath@wexfordcoco.ie & susan.kelly@wexfordcoco.ie

Titanic Fever throughout Wexford

Getting ahead of the rush, *The Spirit of the Titanic* was chosen as the One Book, One Town community read in New Ross and then Wexford over the past six months. All members of the community are encouraged to read and discuss this book together. To encourage curiosity, community events have included readings by author Nicola Pierce, and the irrepressible Irish History Live "Titanic 100" roadshow. This community literacy programme has been supported by the wide range of books that are being published as part of the global promotion of this important anniversary.



McGrath Barrett & Associates Spring Training

McGrath Barrett & Associates is running its spring 2012 series of training courses in May / June 2012. Courses include...

- Skills for the Information Desk (1/2 day).
- Spreading the Net Wider Parts 1 and 2 (1/2 day courses).
- Freely available Quality Web Resources (1 day) and Training the Trainers (1 day).

Full details at www.mcgrathbarrett.ie or email info@mcgrathbarrett.ie.