

# IRISH LIBRARY news

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## Contents

AskAboutIreland's Student  
Zone launched

New library in Leixlip opened by  
An Taoiseach



Your Library 2 and other web-based  
initiatives

### news & events

- Bealtaine festival launched
- Mobile library service for  
Roscommon

### people

- Patricia O'Connell,  
an appreciation

### calendar of events

## INTERACTIVE LEARNING AID LAUNCHED

The Student Zone Primary School Content on the [www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie) website was launched by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr. Dick Roche T.D. on April 23 at Blessington Library, County Wicklow.



*The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local  
Government, Mr. Dick Roche T.D.*

The *Student Zone* is a treasure store of stories, information, photographs and maps, with lots of interactive games to make learning fun. Infants can explore the geography and history of their locality as they listen to O'Bear guiding them through the activities. Older children will find lesson and project materials relating to their place, interactive maps and aerial photos, games, quizzes and drawing activities.

This, the first phase of primary school content on the *Student Zone*, has been developed for the new curricula in history and geography and across all primary school age groups. Each class group has its own section for each subject. Units of content are accompanied by teachers' notes to provide teachers with guidelines for making the best use of the content. The *Looking at Places* section contains local information from all parts of the country, based on the local studies collections in the public libraries.

The original content has been prepared by teams of primary school teachers and local studies librarians. Content is being added all of the time in the existing history, geography and *Looking at Places* sections. In addition, a new science section is in development at the moment and is due to go online later this year. In order to make sure that the content is suitable and relevant for the primary school children in the classroom and at home, public libraries and An Chomhairle have been working in consultation with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the National Centre for Technology in Education and the Primary Curriculum Support Programme.

This project is part of the vision for the future of public libraries which is laid out in the policy document *Branching Out* and is an element of the *Changing Libraries Programme* for the development of electronic services in public libraries.

For further information on the Student Zone Primary School Content and [www.askaboutireland.ie](http://www.askaboutireland.ie), please contact Annette Kelly or Joan Ward, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, 53 & 54 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2 - telephone: 01 676 1167- fax 01 6766721 - e-mail: [akelly@librarycouncil.ie](mailto:akelly@librarycouncil.ie) or e-mail: [jward@librarycouncil.ie](mailto:jward@librarycouncil.ie)

## AN TAOISEACH OPENS LEIXLIP LIBRARY

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The new library in Leixlip, County Kildare, was opened by An Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern T.D. on Friday April 20. The library, which is 930 sq. metres, is open six days a week, with late opening, until 8pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The Taoiseach said that: "It is a marvellous occasion for any community to open a new library. I know that the opening of this new Community Library in Leixlip is especially gratifying for the people of this area who have had such a real input into its development. And so, it is an honour for me to have been invited here today to perform the official opening."

Leixlip library features an adult library, a young adult library and a children's library. It contains a study/research area with laptops provided and a public access Internet area. Wi-Fi is available throughout the building. There is a multi-purpose space which can be used for launches, exhibitions, lectures and children's events and a suite of three music rooms which are also suitable for community meetings and a musician-in-residence programme.

In keeping with Kildare County Council's Corporate and County Strategies and with 2016 and the National Development Plan in mind, this plan embraces the principles of Inclusion, Lifelong learning, Active Citizenship and Access to the Knowledge Economy for our Communities. Kildare County Library Service has 16 service points, a mobile library, a schools service, a Quaker museum, Local History and genealogy service, a library at Naas hospital and also at Athy Travellers Club. The Library Service in Kildare has responsibility for, and supports, the County Arts Service – providing integrated and complimentary programming and is active in supporting the County Arts Service providing integrated

and complimentary programming and is active in supporting the County Arts Centre at Riverbank, Newbridge.

Leixlip Community Library opened in May 2006 at a cost of €3.8 million and was supported and funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and Kildare County Council.

In 2003 Kildare County Council carried out a survey amongst the people of the Leixlip community in order to shape the services which should be available from their new library. The survey was carried out on the streets of the town which provided an ideal opportunity for library staff to be in direct contact with the people to hear about their needs and aspirations. The survey provided valuable information about opening hours, information technology needs, special needs in relation to disability, reading preferences, children's services and general Library and Arts programming. Of particular interest was the range of other nationalities represented which is now reflected throughout the library collections. The guide to using the library is available in all relevant languages.

These guiding principles are very much articulated in the design of this new library and in the range of collections, services and programmes offered. As An Taoiseach said: "There is no doubt that in opening a library, we are opening a window onto the world.

And the availability of a high quality and accessible library service at the heart of the community is one of the best ways to ensure that as children, and adults, we can develop a joy for learning and discovery. These are things, which, as a society and a nation, we must value and cherish."

## YOUR LIBRARY 2 and other Web-based initiatives

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**Dublin City Public Libraries** have been developing their web based services for some time now and the following article describes some of these initiatives:

And you thought [www.dublincitypubliclibraries.ie](http://www.dublincitypubliclibraries.ie) was it? Wait, there's more!

With the ever evolving World Wide Web, Dublin City Public Libraries is keeping apace with its development and with our users. And acquiring new users all the while!

'Web 2.0' is the phenomenon, or in our world, Library 2.0. Web 2.0 refers to the latest generation of services available on the World Wide Web, which lets people collaborate and share information online. And Library 2.0 is all about library users, about us being where our users are, about giving library users a participatory role in the services we offer and the way they are used. It's about community, participation, user engagement and sharing.

Likely you are already doing it too. Uploaded a photo? Posted a comment? Bookmarked a website on [del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us)? Downloaded a podcast? Been instant messaging? Subscribed to an RSS feed? Voted a site as 'most popular'? Invited a friend to link to your 'Bebo' page? If you have, you are 'doing it', so to speak! Terms you may have heard or seen - social software, social networking, blogs, wikis, RSS, folksonomy, the long tail. Sites you may have visited - flickr, [del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us), MySpace, Bebo, YouTube, reddit, wikipedia. Tools you may have used - Google Docs, wikis, Clipmarks, Zoho Writer, Scribd, Squidoo, Librarything, Slideshare. Welcome to the world of 'Web 2.0'!

Now Dublin City Public Libraries is present and active in the realm of Library 2.0! From blogs to photo sharing sites, from RSS to social bookmarking sites, we are doing it. We are on 'flickr', the premier web photo sharing site, sharing photos of library events, locations, publications and more. We are on 'del.icio.us', a social bookmarking site, sharing our extensive list of suggested websites with the widest audience possible. On 'Bloglines', we are building a collection of RSS feeds that our users can access. Our staff are blogging now too, from using blogs to consult with the public (adults and children alike), to facilitating public participation in the One City One Book initiative. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. Dublin City Public Libraries is growing on the web!

And now you are invited to participate by joining the 'Irish

Libraries' group on flickr. Photos of libraries in Ireland, be they public, academic, special, private, government, any type in fact, can be added. This is an opportunity for you to network with other Irish libraries while at the same time extending your user base by reaching a worldwide audience.

See: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/irishlibraries/>.

So if you are not yet on flickr, now is the time!

Some of Dublin City Public Libraries' other forays into Library 2.0:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dublincitypubliclibraries/>

<http://del.icio.us/DublinCityPublicLibraries>

<http://www.bloglines.com/public/DublinCityPublicLibraries> (RSS feeds for our patrons)

<http://www.bloglines.com/public/dubcilib> (RSS feeds for staff)

<http://childrenszone.wordpress.com/>

<http://dublinreaders.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.dublinonecityonebook.ie>

<http://pembrokeaccess.blogspot.com/>

For further information, contact Eddie Byrne, Web Administrator, Dublin City Public Libraries, at [edward.byrne@dublincity.ie](mailto:edward.byrne@dublincity.ie)

Customers of **South Dublin County Libraries** have been hearing voices since the launch of a new digital website in April 2007. <http://digitallibrary.southdublin.ie> offers a groundbreaking new service from South Dublin County Libraries. This project is of major significance as it provides for the first time in the history of Irish public libraries, a virtual library delivered via the library website. Library resources in formats such as e-book, digital audio book, video and music, can now be accessed anywhere, anytime from the library website. Persons with mobility difficulties can download their favourite book from home and people with low vision can now read bestsellers using the zoom text facility in Adobe. There are language courses, study aids and books for children in this new virtual library. The service is being piloted for three months and during that time studies with primary school children and people with access issues will be carried out. All that is required by customers to use the service is a free software download, library card and PIN, and the resources of the virtual library are accessible from all locations.

**Bealtaine**, the national, annual, arts festival celebrating creativity in older age, was launched by Liam Clancy in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, on April 17. *Bealtaine* celebrates older age as a time of renewal, creativity and growth, providing for people to participate in the arts and for everyone to celebrate the work of older artists. The theme of this year's festival is *Forever Begin* taken from the poem *Begin* by Brendan Kennelly.

*Bealtaine*, along with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and the National Library are running *The Lost Art of Letter Writing*, a project that invites people to rediscover the fast disappearing art of letter writing, by writing a letter, on any subject, to any particular addressee. For inspiration, aspiring letter writers can read examples of many different kinds of letters in their local library – whether they be contained in published books of letters or famous, or historical letters. Completed letters should be sent to your local library and Bealtaine. It is planned to put some of the letters on the website, a book of selected letters may also be published in 2008 and some may also be read out on radio.

For more information on the many events being staged, nationwide, as part of *Bealtaine* visit the website [www.bealtaine.com](http://www.bealtaine.com)

**Roscommon County Library's** new mobile library was launched recently and at the launch County Librarian, Richie Farrell, highlighted this new service in promoting inclusion. We print part of his address here, not just to record Roscommon's commitment to developing their services but also to acknowledge the role of the mobile library in rural communities:

'The implementation of a mobile library service for the county is one of the key strategies outlined in the Library Development Plan for the next few years and one of the fundamental development measures. It is also one of the vital, service provision objectives which identify this service in relation to:

- Developing the library infrastructure network.
- Addressing issues of social inclusion and affording opportunities for greater participation
- Strengthening our ability and capacity to engage with communities
- Enhancing and promoting our information service delivery
- Acting as a real point of access with the local authority
- Offers flexibility in terms of service response and assessing level of needs
- Address the provision of cultural services alongside economic and social developments.
- Effective alternative in reaching small populations and isolated communities.
- Support and improve the quality of life of people throughout the county.
- Exposure and visible evidence of the library roles and functions to a wider audience.

From the feedback and response to date, I feel this service will be a force for all that is good about the library service. One of the key concepts within our strategy is the notion of a comprehensive service. By that, we mean that we will provide the variety of services that are necessary in order to meet people's needs. In the Library Development Plan, we identify the overarching statement - 'Learning For Life' - and we have carried that message through to the provision of mobile services. The second issue is one that frequently arose in our consultation process for the Library Development Plan – that the core function of the library service is that of information provision.

While our ICT strategy introduces the notion of 'Library Without Walls,' this vehicle represents library mobility. It is, in essence, bringing the point of contact with the service as close as possible to the user. Each local library and mobile represents a single point of contact in a complex, and largely invisible, network through which flows materials, information and expertise, enabling library users to share in vast resources: in short, local access and global

reach. The real value of this mobile library service is the potential for increased participation by people throughout the county, to everything that the public library has to offer.

Truly, giving every person equal access to information, in all its formats as a right, is a powerful measure of commitment to democratic principles. Public libraries play an important role in safeguarding that right. In a world where information, increasingly, is a commodity with an economic price tag, the championing of access to information as a democratic imperative, and as community and social capital, requires explicit expression, and a service such as this makes a statement of intent. There is no more effective way of advertising our existence than to have a vehicle that penetrates into the heart of communities and brings local authority services within reach of its citizens.

I have very fond and vivid memories of my own experiences working on mobile libraries. As we set out each day from the beautifully named Copper Alley in the late seventies and early eighties, the prospect of a three spell day ahead of you, the old brown trays precariously perched on your lap, the smell of gas from the heater tied to the side of the vehicle, Dexys Midnight Runners', 'Come On Eileen' coming from an old battered Phillips radio, sandwiches at the ready, we felt like pioneers heading to the frontiers of such places as Rush, Loughshinny, Lusk and Skerries and down to the large estates of Tallaght and Lucan. In many cases, we were the only contact of a cultural nature in these areas at that time. Although times have changed and we now have better stock, better resources, better vehicles and better ICT, the principles remain the same - to provide the visibility and presence of our services and to build relationships with the public.

I would like to thank all the people involved in this project, the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government for the capital funding, the Library Council, Roscommon County Council and elected members and all the staff of the library services'.

## people

It is with great regret that we learned of the death of **Patricia O'Connell**. The following appreciation by Marie Reddan, Librarian, NUI Galway, first appeared in *Inform*, the newsletter of the James Hardiman Library, NUI Galway, March 2007. Pat served as member of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna from 1988 to 1992.

Pat O'Connell died in Dublin on April 6 2006, to the great sadness of her colleagues and many friends in the University and in Galway. A graduate of UCD with an Honours MA in Spanish, Pat worked there and in the Italian institute in Dublin before moving to UCG as an Assistant Lecturer in Spanish in 1962. In 1965, Pat had the distinction of being the first woman to be appointed Assistant Librarian to the then exclusively male staffed library. Shortly afterwards she became Acquisitions Sub-Librarian, and was appointed Acting Librarian in 1987, when she successfully guided the Library through automation.

The Irish Spanish connection was a life-long interest, and on her retirement in 1992 she continued her research into the history of the Irish Colleges in Spain and Portugal, publishing three volumes on the subject – the last one on the Irish College in Santiago de Compostela was launched in the Royal Irish Academy only a month before her death.

But for all of us, our memories of Pat are of a great colleague, Christian in the deepest sense, witty, entertaining and great company. Nothing fazed her – most travels for Pat involved drama and adventure, but always a shining knight to the rescue somewhere along the camino. I had the great advantage of having her work with me for a few months after my arrival at the end of 1991 and I never had a dull day with her. Our friendship continued since then, and I never failed to marvel at her enthusiasm for life and living. She was, and will be, forever young.

*Marie Reddan, Librarian, James Hardiman Library, NUI, Galway.*



## May 2007

- 1-31st *Bealtaine 2007: Celebrating creativity in older age, 1- 31 May 2007*  
The theme of the festival this year is 'forever begin'.  
Details: Age & Opportunity, 01 805 7709;  
[www.olderinireland.ie](http://www.olderinireland.ie); [bealtaine@mie.ie](mailto:bealtaine@mie.ie)
- 23rd *Getting to the right answer: answering users' queries – a one-day course presented by McGrath Barrett & Associates in the I.P.A., Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4.*  
To register, or for further details, please contact:  
Dr. Bríd McGrath, McGrath Barrett & Associates, 2 Richmond Hill, Rathmines, Dublin 6.  
Phone/fax: 01-4977043; mobile: 087-2476424;  
email: [mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net](mailto:mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net)
- 24th *Getting to the right answer: answering users' queries – a one-day course presented by McGrath Barrett & Associates in the I.P.A., Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4.*  
To register, or for further details, please contact:  
Dr. Bríd McGrath, McGrath Barrett & Associates, 2 Richmond Hill, Rathmines, Dublin 6.  
Phone/fax: 01-4977043; mobile: 087-2476424;  
email: [mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net](mailto:mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net)
- 24-25th *LIBER Think Tank on the future value of the book as artefact and the future value of digital documentary heritage, National Library of Sweden, Stockholm.*  
Programme, etc. <http://abm-centrum.se/ThinkTankPresentation.htm>
- 29th *AGI (Acquisitions Group of Ireland) one day seminar on acquisitions in the Mercer Hotel in Dublin. The seminar is aimed at people who are new to acquisitions and would like an overview of the job from different perspectives.*  
Details of the event including the programme and application form are available at  
<http://www.lagi.ie/introtoacq.htm>.  
Places are limited so early booking is advised.

## June 2007

- 14th – 15th *IIUG 6: annual Irish Innovative Users Group conference will be held in Sligo Institute of Technology on 14-15th June 2007. Topics include Millennium library systems and issues in higher education in Ireland. Non members welcome. Further details available soon at <http://www.millennium-users.org/> Initial enquiries to: [info@millennium-users.org](mailto:info@millennium-users.org)*
- 18th *Advanced internet searching for information workers - a one-day course presented by McGrath Barrett & Associates in the I.P.A., Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4. To register, or for further details, please contact: Dr. Bríd McGrath, McGrath Barrett & Associates, 2 Richmond Hill, Rathmines, Dublin 6. Phone/fax: 01-4977043; mobile: 087-2476424; email: [mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net](mailto:mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net)*

19th *Advanced internet searching for information workers - a one-day course presented by McGrath Barrett & Associates in the I.P.A., Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4. To register, or for further details, please contact: Dr. Bríd McGrath, McGrath Barrett & Associates, 2 Richmond Hill, Rathmines, Dublin 6. Phone/fax: 01-4977043; mobile: 087-2476424; email: [mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net](mailto:mcgrathbarrett@eircom.net)*

28-30th *Umbrella 2007 – Catalysts for change – making a difference, De Havilland Campus, The University of Hertfordshire. Details: [www.umbrella2007.org.uk](http://www.umbrella2007.org.uk)*

## July 2007

3-6th *European integration: conditions and challenges for libraries – LIBER 36th Annual General Conference, National Library of Poland, Warsaw. Conference programme, etc. <http://liber2007.buw.uw.edu.pl/>*

## September 2007

12-15th *Pathways to new roles: the education, training and continuing development of the Health Library & Information Workforce. European Association for Health Information & Libraries (EAHIL) Workshop 2007. Krakow, Poland. Registration starts 2 April. See following for further details:  
<http://www.bm.cm-uj.krakow.pl/eahil/index.php>*

## October 2007

10th -12th *PLA Conference 2007: Inform Educate Entertain - Whose role is it anyway? The Programme will be extremely topical and update you on the major development, themes and challenges facing public libraries. It will include: a Government Minister and senior local politicians, Bridget McConnell, Chief Executive, Culture and Sport Glasgow, the UK's latest and largest library authority to move out of local authority control into a charitable company, MLA on Blueprint for Excellence: Public Libraries 2008-2011, Elaine Fulton, Director of SLIC on Building on Success: a public library quality improvement matrix for Scotland, Miranda McKearney of The Reading Agency and author Kate Mosse on Year of Reading 2008, Liz Cleaver, Controller, Learning, BBC, Joe Prior, Head of Marketing, Penguin, Library tours and workshops in the redeveloped Mitchell Library, Public Library Building Awards 2007. Programme Director: Karen Cunningham, Head of Glasgow Libraries. For more information see <http://www.cilip.org.uk/groups/plg/pla2007/>*

18th – 20th *A Mirror on the World: conference to commemorate the 1707 Act of Parliament establishing the library. Marsh's Library. For information and booking form contact Ann Simmons, Marsh's Library, St. Patrick's Close, Dublin 8. Email: [keeper@marshlibrary.ie](mailto:keeper@marshlibrary.ie) Tel: 01-4543511. Accommodation is limited, early booking is essential.*



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