

# IRISH | LIBRARY | NEWS

MARCH 2009 · #288

CORK COUNTY LIBRARY 2

KILKENNY COUNTY LIBRARY 2

## Write on!

Authors have even more reason to cheer during Library Ireland Week this year, with the announcement that they may now apply to receive payments when their books are borrowed from public libraries.

The Public Lending Remuneration Scheme (PLR) was established at the end of last year with funding provided by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Authors (and illustrators and translators) who register their books with An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, who are managing the scheme, may be eligible to receive a payment each time the book is borrowed from one of the country's 358 public libraries.

Speaking at An Chomhairle Leabharlanna on March 3 2009, Minister of State Michael Kitt, T.D., thanked the library services around the country for their co-operation in getting the scheme underway. 'Public libraries have started providing An Chomhairle Leabharlanna with details of what books they lend each month and I'm delighted that the An Chomhairle Leabharlanna is now inviting authors to register for the scheme. The Department is pleased to be able to support writers through the PLR'.

There are 14 million visits to Irish public libraries each year, resulting in 12.5 million loans of books.

Conor Kostick of the Irish Writers' Union welcomed PLR, remarking that 'Writers value the role of libraries and will continue to co-operate with librarians in promoting Irish literature. In addition to providing some money to authors, which is always welcome, the PLR scheme will give writers information about where and by whom their books are being read and all authors find that kind of feedback very encouraging'.



At the launch are Ruth Flanagan, Cork County Librarian, Author Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Cllr. Mark Dearey, Chairman of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, Minister of State Michael Kitt, T.D., Conor Kostick, Irish Writers Union, Deirdre Ellis King, Dublin City Librarian.

Many Irish authors already receive PLR payments from the UK, where a scheme has been in operation since 1979. The Irish scheme is closely modelled on the UK one, and according to Cllr. Mark Dearey, Chairman of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, the UK authorities have been of great assistance in the establishment of the scheme here: 'We have a close working relationship with the PLR office in the UK and I want to thank them for their the advice and support they have given to us'.

Submitting her own registration form at An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, author Éilís Ní Dhuibhne remarked: 'The part libraries play in disseminating books, often long after they have gone out of print, is crucial. My guess is that libraries will be even more used in the future. That authors will now benefit thanks to the implementation of PLR in Ireland is wonderful. I am immensely grateful to the Irish Writer's Union and others who have campaigned long and hard for this day.'

Information on the scheme is available at [www.plr.ie](http://www.plr.ie). ILN

# Cork County Library

Children's Book Festival is the most successful event in **Cork County Library's** festival calendar and continues to grow each year with more and more school children, teachers, toddlers, parents and teenagers attending. There were 110 events in 28 libraries in the county and 35 writers and professional artists working throughout the month. Overall attendances reached almost 4,500.

The programme featured some of Ireland's best-known children's writers: Ré Ó'Laighléis, John W Sexton, Vincent McDonnell, Tony Curtis, Brianog Brady Dawson, Paul Tubb and in addition there were some new Irish names to the programme this year. Popular children's author Derek Landy, author of *Skulduggery Pleasant*, was interviewed by RTÉ's Aidan Stanley before an audience of 140 children in the Briery Gap, Macroom. Judi Curtin, a native of Cork, discussed her six *Alice and Megan* books. Pauric Brennan read from his book *The Order of the Dragon*.

Multi-award winning author and illustrator Babette Cole (*Princess Smarty Pants* and *Doctor Dog*) held a number of lively and interactive sessions. Babette also agreed to design this year's festival T-Shirt. Another luminary to come to this year's festival was highly acclaimed illustrator and author for children Tony Ross. This year the Festival organisers worked with the Goethe Institute to bring German writer, Thomas Feibel, to Mallow Library. The aim of this was to introduce new writing by foreign language authors. Students of German from the local Secondary schools came to meet this highly acclaimed author and journalist specialising in youth and media.



Tony Ross in Dunmanway Library

He read from his thriller *Blackmail*, which has been nominated for numerous awards and discussed the issues it raises such as rock music, emails and criminal gangs, to the delight of students and teachers alike.

Storytellers this year were the ever popular Pat Speight, Eddie Lenihan and Amy Kerwin. Melissa Baker brought her unique style of storytelling to Bantry and Castletownbere in a gypsy wagon. This wagon housed strange creatures who also "participated" in the storytelling. Mixing legends, histories and myths from cultures as diverse as China and the Native Americans, stories were told in 40 minute sessions. The children loved it! [ILN](#)

↑ CORK COUNTY LIBRARY

↓ KILKENNY COUNTY LIBRARY

# Kilkenny County Library Service

**Kilkenny County Library Service** is the first in the Republic of Ireland to participate in the Six Book Challenge 2009. This is an annual incentive scheme for less confident adult readers run by the Reading Agency in the UK.

Targeted at emergent readers, people are invited to read 6 books from January to June, recording their reading in a reading diary in order to receive a certificate to celebrate their achievement.

The titles are not from a prescribed list – participants are free to choose books at a level to suit themselves. Each branch carries a collection of *Quick Reads* and *Open Door* titles which are very popular.

The scheme has met with great interest among organisations throughout the county, with almost 100 readers registered to date. Participants are invited to share their experiences in a monthly article in the local newspaper and the challenge will culminate in an evening of celebration in June.

For further details check the website [www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk](http://www.sixbookchallenge.org.uk) or contact the co-ordinator for Kilkenny County Library – [Trish Nolan](#) at 056 779 4173. [ILN](#)



In Kilkenny library are a group of challenge participants from National Learning Network, Kilkenny.

# Meath County Council

On January 27 2009 in Rathcairn branch library, Meath County Council Library Service hosted a hugely interesting presentation by Miriam Moffitt based on her recent book *Soupers and Jumpers: The Protestant Missions in Connemara, 1848-1937* (Nonsuch, 2008).

The study outlines the operations of the missions, detailing the establishment of bible schools, orphanages, and Protestant churches throughout north and west Connemara. It recounts the Roman Catholic Church's aggressive campaign against the missionaries, and the divisions religious conversion caused in small communities against a backdrop of bad harvests and social unrest.

The book provides an insight into the lives of the rural poor in 19th century Ireland and gives genealogical details of many convert families.

Miriam Moffitt, a native of Charlestown, Co. Mayo, received a doctorate of history from NUI Maynooth where she is currently a post-doctoral research fellow. The presentation was well attended by Rathcairn people, many of whose families hail from Connemara originally. [ILN](#)



Teresa Uí Mhairtín (branch librarian) and Miriam Moffitt, Rathcairn branch library

↑ MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

↓ SOUTH DUBLIN LIBRARIES

## South Dublin Libraries



At the eGovernment Awards Georgina Byrne, Cllr Gus O'Connell (Deputy Mayor, South Dublin County Council), Minister Hanafin, Cathal Magee, Eircom Managing Director

At an awards ceremony in the Four Seasons hotel on February 19th, South Dublin Libraries won 2 eGovernment awards for its digital book service – Download Zone. It won the Local Government eGovernment award and also won the overall eGovernment award from 35 entrants in 9 categories.

The Digital Book Service provides an online service whereby you can sign up to the library service and download audio books as well as reserve books online, providing direct access to the world of books to those with visual or literacy problems from their own home or office. The planning and negotiation needed by those running this project, to secure the rights to provide audio books was considered both innovative and visionary. [ILN](#)



## NUI MAYNOOTH

The Library and the School of English, Media and Theatre Studies at **NUI Maynooth** recently collaborated to host a major exhibition, Jack Kerouac Back on the Road, featuring the original 127-foot scroll of the text of Kerouac's *On the Road*, typed in one piece in 1951.

This was the last of three venues on this side of the Atlantic before it returned to America.



Photograph courtesy of Christies, New York.

The exhibition was held in the Russell Library at NUI Maynooth from Thursday 5 March to Thursday 19 March.

The manuscript was on loan from the Collection of James S. Irsay © Estate of Anthony G. Sampatacacus and the Estate of Jan Kerouac. Prior to transferring to the Russell Library, the exhibition was hosted by the Clinton Institute for American Studies at University College Dublin.

## PEOPLE

**Mary Kelleher**, Archivist/Librarian with the RDS Library retired on 31 December 2008 after 47 years working at the Library. To commemorate the event she was presented with a festschrift called *Auguri* meaning 'best wishes' in Italian. Contributors to *Auguri* included Seamus Heaney, Maeve Binchy and Dr Toby Barnard.

Her first job at the Library was as a library assistant: she then went to Italy for a year to study book restoration. Her practical experience in helping to rescue thousands of books from the great floods in Florence of 1966 was unfortunately put to good use in 1986 when Hurricane Charlie damaged many items in the RDS Library.

Mary returned from Italy after a year but became involved with the work of the Italian Cultural Institute here in Dublin. Her work on behalf of Italian culture was recognised last year when she was awarded a prestigious state honour at the Italian Embassy.

She was also co-opted by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna onto COLICO, the Committee on Library Co-Operation in Ireland and served for 6 years.

Her generosity to her colleagues and the esteem in which she is held by them was shown by the numbers who came to her retirement party and included people from all aspects of her professional and personal life: work colleagues from the RDS, colleagues from the National Library and other libraries in Dublin, from An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, from other cultural institutions, Italian friends and colleagues from the Italian Institute, Members and Committee members of the RDS, friends and relatives.

*Auguri*: to Mary Kelleher / edited by Fergus Mulligan. – Dublin: Royal Dublin Society, 2009; ISBN: 9780860270560

## ↑ NUI MAYNOOTH

## ↓ MONAGHAN

## ↑ PEOPLE

## MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

Clones town, the location of **Monaghan County Council's** new library headquarters and branch library, is the entry point to the county for visitors travelling from the west of Ireland

The Library HQ and Branch Library now occupy a centrally located area which is earmarked for extensive redevelopment. It is envisaged that the new library building will be at the heart of this redevelopment acting as a civic and cultural centre for the community.

The new building is 1,450m<sup>2</sup> in area and replaces the antiquated facilities of the old library headquarters, which was housed in the 19th century Market House since its inception in 1928. The building is set in a high quality public square with extensive seating and landscaping, providing an external public focus and an appropriate and attractive setting. Car parking is available directly in front of the building, with wheelchair access car parking available immediately in front of the main entrance.

The branch library has been allocated the most prominent, accessible and visually apparent location within the building, ensuring that it plays to the widest possible audience.

The new library is already making a big impact on the local environment, the local economy and the cultural and social fabric of Clones. The town has a strong sense of community and now the Library can play a bigger part in community developments. The plaza outside is a new focal point for the people of the town and the area. It is a new, green, meeting place for the community. As the Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero once said 'If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need'.

The new library was officially launched on Thursday May 22 2008 by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, John Gormley, T.D.

Further details, including the complete version of this article, appear on [www.librarybuildings.ie](http://www.librarybuildings.ie)



## April 2009

**1**  
**Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library – a lunchtime lecture series**  
*The Wilmot papers: travels in France, Russia and Italy, 1801-1822* by Angela Byrne, NUI Maynooth. 1-2 pm, Meeting Room, [Royal Irish Academy](#), 19 Dawson Street, Dublin 2. Admission free.

**13–15**  
**Legal deposit of newspapers for libraries: challenges of the digital environment**  
IFLA International Newspaper Conference, Moscow. Contact: [Ed King](#), Secretary, IFLA Newspaper Section, The British Library, Colindale Avenue, London NW9 5HE. T: +44 (0)207 412 7362; E: [ed.king@bl.uk](mailto:ed.king@bl.uk)

**22**  
**Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library**  
a lunchtime lecture series: *The Cathach of Colm Cille – Ireland's oldest book?* by [Dáibhí Ó Cróinín](#), MRIA. 1-2 pm, Meeting Room, [Royal Irish Academy](#), 19 Dawson Street, Dublin 2. Admission free.

**23**  
**World Book and Copyright Day**

**29–1**  
**Managing Change in the Information Age**  
Joint Conference of the LAI and [CILIP Ireland](#), Hilton Hotel, Belfast. Conference secretary, [Elga Logue](#)

## May 2009

**6**  
**Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library – a lunchtime lecture series:**  
*The Book of O'Lees* by [Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha](#), DIAS, School of Celtic Studies. 1-2 pm, Meeting Room, [Royal Irish Academy](#), 19 Dawson Street, Dublin 2. Admission free.

**7–9**  
**EBLIDA Annual Council Meeting and International Conference**  
A Library Policy for Europe, Vienna, 7–9 May 2009.

## June 2009

**10**  
**Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library – a lunchtime lecture series**  
*The first President of the RIA: Lord Charlemont and his manuscripts* by [James Kelly](#), MRIA. 1-2 pm, Meeting Room, [Royal Irish Academy](#), 19 Dawson Street, Dublin 2. Admission free.

## July 2009

**5–10**  
**International Association of Music Libraries Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML) annual conference, Amsterdam.** Details: <http://www.iaml.info/en/activities/conferences>

## August 2009

**23–27**  
**[Libraries create futures: building on cultural heritage](#)**  
IFLA World Library and Information Congress: 75th IFLA General Conference and Council, Milan.

### ↓ PUBLICATIONS

### ↑ CALENDAR

### ↓ CONTACT DETAILS

## Publications



Pat Walsh and Eamonn Gilmore, T.D.

Pat Walsh, a member of staff of Dún Laoghaire County Council's public library service is the author of the recently published book entitled, *The Curious Case of the Mayo Librarian*. The book was launched by local T.D. and leader of the Labour Party, Eamonn Gilmore at a reception in Deans Grange Library on February 5th.

The book charts the appointment of Letitia Dunbar Harrison, a graduate of Trinity College, to the position of Mayo County Librarian in 1930, and her subsequent dismissal from that post on the grounds that as a Protestant, her religious belief rendered her morally incapable of serving the needs of the local community.

Harrison had been appointed under the Local Appointments Commission, which had been set up in 1926 to regulate public appointments and to ensure that equality of opportunity prevailed. The local County Councils were not empowered to refuse to recognise appointments made by this body.

Pat Walsh outlines the manner in which Mayo Library Committee formally rejected the appointment of Harrison as County Librarian in November 1930.

The County Council reasoned publicly that they could not accept the appointment of a County Librarian, who was not fluent in Irish, an inadequacy that had been taken fully into account in the process of appointment by the Appointments Commission as the prevailing legislation allowed an appointee three years to acquire proficiency in Irish.

The decision taken by the Library Committee was later endorsed by Mayo County Council in December 1930, in spite of warnings that such action was illegal.

There was much official condemnation of the Council's actions initially, resulting in the abolition of the Council by the Minister for Local Government.

Inevitably, this public condemnation brought Harrison face to face with extensive opposition to her role as Librarian in Mayo in 1931. By June of the same year 118 out of 122 libraries had stopped providing local services and this boycott was rendering her position increasingly untenable.

Pat Walsh examines extensively the public consequences of the appointment of Harrison to the erstwhile innocuous position of County Librarian and highlights the struggles of Church and State to come to terms with what seemed to be conflicting civic and moral duties. The book makes a fascinating study of the history of the Free State, and exposes the fears and prejudices of a population still struggling its past.

*The Curious Case of the Mayo Librarian*. [Mercier Press](#), 2009. ISBN: 1856356152

## Next Issue

Please note that Irish Library News is only available as a download. If you would like to have a copy emailed to you or your workplace, please send your name and email address to the Editor – and please, do not forget to notify any subsequent changes to your email address.

## Copy date for next issue is March 20th 2009

Contributions to Irish Library News and / or [www.library.ie](http://www.library.ie) should be sent to Alun Bevan, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, 53-54 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2.

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