

The Future of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan T.D, on 10th October, 2011 announced further rationalisation of State agencies in his Department. As part of a rigorous appraisal of the State agencies under the aegis of his Department, the number of agencies is being reduced by 43%, from 21 to 12.

The Minister announced that An Chomhairle Leabharlanna- the Library Council would be dissolved, with any key residual functions to be subsumed into an existing public body. The staff of An Chomhairle will be redeployed in accordance with the terms of the Irish government's *Public Service Agreement*.

The Minister stated that he is committed to the *Programme for Government's* overarching objective of public sector reform by making substantial cuts to the number of State bodies and companies as part of the rationalisation programme.

While thanking the Board and staff of An Chomhairle for their dedicated service, Minister Hogan indicated that the rationalisation was a direct response to the current economic crisis and a necessary means of contributing to the reduction of overall public sector costs through enhanced efficiency.

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council), was established by the **Public Libraries Act, 1947**, and has the following functions, as set out in the **Local Government Act, 2001** (section 79):

- The provision of advice, assistance and services to library authorities in relation to the public library service.
- The making of such recommendations to and the provision of such services for the Minister in relation to the public library service.
- Action to promote and facilitate library co-operation and the maintenance
<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2001/en/act/pub/0037/sec0079.html>

Since 31st December 2008, An Chomhairle is responsible for the management of the Irish [Public Lending Remuneration \(PLR\) Scheme](#), established by the [Copyright and Related Rights \(Amendment\) Act, 2007](#).

An Chomhairle engages in a wide range of policy advice, support and activities in the public library service in co-operation with the local government sector, government departments and state agencies in Ireland. We work closely with the wider library sector in Ireland together with cultural, education and community institutions and interests to provide support for relevant library usage. Relationships with our colleagues in the authorities and cognate bodies in the United Kingdom and Europe have also prospered through collaboration in projects and policy formulation. These support

mechanisms and services, as far as is practicable, will be managed in the library unit in the future. Discussions with our parent government department on these matters are taking shape. Further information will issue at a later stage.

FÁS eLearning at the Library gains FETAC Certificate

The national elearning at the library partnership between the public library network, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and FÁS will be fully accredited for learners. Help for library based learners to progress further, if this is their choice through support from the public library service, FAS and An Chomhairle is an additional option in the new programme.

The revised programme offers a sixteen-week course to public library members based on one two-hour tutor-led sessions per week, leading to the nationally recognised accreditation of a FETAC award in Computer Literacy (FETAC Level 3).

In addition to the tutor-led training, participants will also have access to tailored resources to support their learning and gain certification. A *Know IT* CD and Workbook, developed by FÁS, will support each participant throughout the Programme. This resource is designed for people who wish to take their first steps in learning about computers. It concentrates on practical tasks such as sending and receiving email, simple word processing and using the internet to find information. *Know IT* also contains a unit on computer basics and tutorials on mouse and keyboard skills.



NALA - Write on 4 Work

Participants can also access courseware from NALA including the “Write on 4 Work” Course www.writeon.ie which offers FETAC certification across ten individual modules including Computer Literacy, Digital Media and Internet Skills. Participants may opt to continue their progress through the NALA courseware after completion of the course.

Progression

Progression to other training options for library based learners is an essential outcome of the revised programme. The trainer will assist participants in identifying training options which may include online training through FÁS e-College, other FÁS courses and other training courses which may be available locally. There will be a small budget to promote the increased offer which will be allocated in consultation with the County or City Librarian.

Tenders

A training plan and support specification is included in the tender documentation. In advance of issuing the tender, each training centre will talk to the County/City Librarian to establish the choice of libraries, and the capacity of the libraries in terms of learners to be facilitated, to be included in

the programme. The tender will specify the libraries to be included in the programme and the number of hours learning to be allowed for in each. It is expected that each tender will take 7 weeks to complete the process from issue of tender to the learners starting the courses in the library.

The Working Group on eLearning at the Library welcomed the progress on this programme at its meeting in October <http://www.librarycouncil.ie/policies/eLearningattheLibrary.shtml>

Further information on the programme is available from Brendan Teeling at An Chomhairle Leabharlanna bteeelin@librarycouncil.ie.

Frontline: 3 years on

Library staff gave their views on the value of the three year *Frontline* online training on reading development recently. This is the first online training programme organised for public library service in Ireland. The seminar, organised by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna took place in September in Dublin City's refurbished Carnegie Library in Rathmines.



Frontline co-ordinators (from left to right): Catherine Gallagher (South Dublin), Paula Leavy McCarthy (Mayo) and Frances O'Gorman (Clare)

Representatives from twenty library authorities spoke about the 600 library staff who participated in the nationwide *Frontline* programme, which was launched in 2008. Each library authority offered the course, nominating a co-ordinator to oversee the implementation of the course.

The online content, delivered by *Opening the Book*, received financial support from the library authorities and the Department of the environment, Heritage and Local Government, was managed by An Chomhairle, and completed the three year term in August, 2011.

At the event in Rathmines Library, Margaret Hayes, Dublin City Librarian, considered that the *'Frontline training develops both staff confidence and competence in talking to clients, recommending materials, creating exhibitions and expanding their own reading horizons'*. She outlined the benefits of the online training as resulting in *'the user choice has increased with: more books are offered in different ways. This is broadening the choice for readers, provides easy access to a wide variety of books and tempts them to borrow more'*.



Frontline co-ordinators (from left to right): Hilda King (Leitrim), Sharon Flanagan (Meath), Pauline Brennan (Sligo) and Marianne Lynch (Donegal)

Brendan Martin, Wicklow County Librarian, agreed that both staff and users benefit from the training in his library authority. He noted that completing the *Frontline* course can sometimes take more hours than suggested and advised that consideration should also be given to what stock is displayed in order to make the most out of the course.

Each participant at the seminar gave an overview on the roll-out of *Frontline* in their library authority highlighting both benefits and challenges encountered in the implementation of the programme. The overall feedback was very positive and suggestions were made for the future development of the training. Live feedback on *Frontline* from library staff can be found at:

<http://www.openingthebook.ie/feedback/>

Dave Corcoran, Representing the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government congratulated the authorities and the participants on their enthusiastic response to the programme. *'Increasing the number of library users is a testament to the staff contribution'*, arising from the impressive level of participation across the library authorities. He concluded his presentation by *'thanking staff for participating in Frontline and taking the programme in a challenging environment of fewer staff'*.

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna thanks all participants and their authorities for their wholehearted support for the training. We are preparing a report on the *Frontline* training programme and will include library authorities' feedback in its reporting.

The second phase of the programme, starting this autumn has attracted twenty four authorities to date. The participants will be able to take the twenty-two hour course, accredited by the UK Skills Council. We wish the participants well with improving the library service using the techniques and skills to develop readers and assist with the wide range of stock, some 13 million items to all library users. Further details on the *Frontline* course are available at:

<http://www.librarycouncil.ie/training/frontline-online-reader-development-course/>.



Guest speakers at the Frontline meeting (from left to right): Brendan Martin (Wicklow County Librarian), Margaret Hayes (Dublin City Librarian) and Dave Corcoran (Department of Environment, Community & Local Government)

Say it Write guidelines launched

An Chomhairle Leabharlanna has launched, guidelines for public library staff in communicating effectively with the public. The guidelines can be accessed at www.library.ie/sayitwrite.



The need for guidance in communications was identified as a concern by public library staff during the discussions which took place in the support training provided with the National Disability Strategy funding. The courses aimed at public library staff covered the areas of reasonable accommodation facilities to be provided to people with disabilities, as outlined in the Irish legislation and led to further support entitled *Mind Your Customer* to improve communications support for public library staff and to collaborate more closely with people with disabilities. The full programme of supports were taken up by library staff in all library authorities from 2005 to 2010.

The resulting online assistance which An Chomhairle commissioned the drafting of guidance which is now published on www.library.ie/sayitwrite. Compiled by Maureen Gilbert, who provided the training and guidance for library staff during the five year programme, An Chomhairle wishes to thank her for her valuable support. The funding support of the department of the environment, Heritage and Local Government is also gratefully acknowledged.

Drama in the Library!

Carlow Central Library played its part in *Culture Night* recently when a short play called *Life on the Sofa* was performed in the library by members of Carlow Little Theatre Society.

This was the first time that the library was used as a venue for a dramatic production. The play itself followed the life of a couple through all of the ups and downs of everyday life from early courtship to old age. Another dimension was the use of grainy black and white film to highlight the early years of the relationship. The sofa was eventually taken over by new occupants who introduced it to a totally different household and lifestyle.



A mix of pathos and comedy this performance was thoroughly enjoyed by all. It certainly was a new but welcome departure for the library service!

News from Clare Libraries

■ Clare County Library ageing positively and happy to volunteer

Positive Ageing Week 2011 took place between September 23 and 30 this year and, as it coincided with *National Day of Volunteering* on September 30, Clare County Library seized the opportunity to celebrate both of these worthy occasions together. A nationwide Knitathon took place as part of activities organised for *National Day of Volunteering* so members of the Shannon Apostolic Society visited Sean Lemass Public Library in Shannon, where they formed a cosy circle and knit and chatted to their hearts' content. The ladies in attendance created beautifully



Marie Clohessy with knitted smoothie hats

knitted squares of all colours to be put together at a later stage to produce a blanket that will be donated to a local charity. Members of the public were encouraged to come along and watch the fun or to join in and some even got handy hints and tips from the experts.

In the De Valera Public Library in Ennis on the same date local senior citizens joined forces with local volunteers to knit a huge number of little hats for the *Innocent Smoothie Big Knit* campaign. The wonderful array of hats will be placed on special promotional bottles of Innocent Smoothies. Last year as part of the innocent big knit campaign a whopping 80,000 little hats were knit by generous people all over Ireland, raising €20,000 and much needed awareness for Age Action Ireland. The funds were put to great use to ensure that older people in Ireland stayed well and warm and the plan is to achieve the same, if not better, results this year. Clare County Library was delighted to be able to take part in such a worthwhile activity and extends their sincere thanks to all who participated.

Also to mark *Positive Ageing Week*, Therese Hourigan from the Commission for Communications Regulation held an advice clinic in the De Valera Public Library in Ennis. The aim was to empower consumers to take direct action regarding poor service provision, quality or other issues and to provide users with sufficient information to deal with their service providers. Consumer guides were distributed on the day and many people commented on what a useful service it was.

■ Scariff Poetry Group

Scariff Poetry Group opened its 2nd poetry exhibition of the year at Scariff Public Library on Tuesday October 4. Earlier this year the group produced an exhibition as part of the Iniscealtra Festival and it was very well received.

The exhibition ran until October 15, and consisted of a mixture of poetry and art, with members displaying between five to ten poems and a piece of art related to their work.

The group, set up by librarian, Aileen McDonagh, has been running successfully for almost three years and has a core attendance of approximately ten members. Passing tourists often attend so there is a constant flow of new perspectives and new members are always welcome! The group meets every second Tuesday at Scariff Public Library to discuss various themes, topics and poets.



Members of Scariff Poetry Group at the opening of their exhibition

Sky rabbit and other paintings in Cork

An exhibition of work by children's book illustrator Aileen McGovern was recently shown at Cork County Library Headquarters. This exhibition featured prints from Aileen's picture book *Sky Rabbit* and other recent work and was shown as part of the Cork County Library and Arts Service's annual *Children's Book Festival* which took place in twenty-eight libraries during the month of October.

Aileen McGovern is originally from County Armagh but now lives near Rosscarberry in County Cork. She has exhibited widely in Ireland and abroad. *Sky Rabbit* is Aileen's first children's book and further books featuring the continuing adventures of *Sky Rabbit* are planned.

Aileen studied Fine Art at The National College of Art and Design in Dublin graduating with an Honours Degree in 1994. Soon after she moved to the Netherlands where she was based for ten years and spent her time painting, teaching and travelling, managing to circumnavigate the globe a couple of times. Aileen says, 'I am inspired by travelling. Basically we all have the same dreams, hopes and aspirations, a common bond'. On returning to Ireland



she moved to Cork where she has been based for the last five years. She exhibits widely throughout Ireland and was part of an artist's Co-operative *Tayt* in Clonakilty, County Cork.

Facilitating art workshops for children has led her to write, illustrate and publish her first children's book, *Sky Rabbit*. It is aimed at 4-8 year olds and tells the story of a little rabbit who dreams of flying.

She says 'To convey a feeling of magic and wonder I chose to place much of the *Sky Rabbit* story in a night setting. A deep blue is prominent in most of the illustrations to show the depth of the unknown, to hint at possibilities and a place where dreams might come true.'

'A lot of the art I do is quite illustrative and this lends itself to children, so writing an illustrated book for children seemed like the next logical step'.

Jim Henson and his Muppets have had a huge influence on her art and imagination.

For further information on the exhibition please contact: the Arts Office, County Library Headquarters on 021 -4346210, E mail: arts@corkcoco.ie.

Culture Night 2011

On Friday 23 September, locals and visitors across the island of Ireland enjoyed the unique experience of *Culture Night*, a night of free entertainment, discovery and adventure that took place in a record twenty-eight towns, cities, counties and islands in Ireland. Museums, galleries, churches, historic houses, artists' studios and cultural centres opened their doors late into the evening welcoming people of all ages to taste and sample their cultural delights for free.

■ Culture Night celebrations @ Clare County Libraries

County Clare participated in *Culture Night* with an array of fine cultural activities around the county.

Doing their part on the night Clare County Library hosted a recital in the De Valera Public Library in Ennis at 7.30pm. The recital, entitled *Synge Songs* was performed by Cathy Desmond on violin and viola with accompaniment on piano by Fiona Walsh, leader of the Ennis Gospel Choir. Together they played a selection of airs and ballads popular at the turn of the century in the time of J.M. Synge. The selection included *Down by The Sally Gardens*, *The Lark in the Clear Air* and *Anach Cuain* amongst others.



Fiona Walsh and Cathy Desmond on Culture Night

Also on the night Saoirse Glennon, who recently played Pegeen Mike in Ennis Players production of *Playboy Of The Western World*, read a poem by Synge's mentor, Yeats, and tenor and Balfe specialist, Tony Murray, sang *Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms* one of Moore's Melodies.

The night was a resounding success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

■ Polish Culture Night in City Library, Kilkenny

As part of this year's *Culture Night*, Kilkenny City Library hosted an evening celebrating Polish Culture. The Polish community decorated the library with information displays, craftwork and food presentation. There were talks on the history and natural attractions of Poland. Children and adults sang in Polish. There was a short piece of drama from children in their native language. Irish and Polish, as well as other nationalities mingled together and enjoyed the native food prepared by Polish chefs. Over 100 people of all ages, including local dignitaries attended on the night which was organised in partnership with members of the Polish community.



New state of the art library for Gaioth Dobhair!

After much anticipation the doors of the new Leabharlann Phobail Gaioth Dobhair opened to the public on Monday October 3. The community has received the new 501sq metre library, very well with 400 people joining and over 1500 visitors in the first few weeks of business. The library is open thirty-one hours per week, with one late evening.

Donegal County Council Library Service's newest community location at Aislann Ghaioth Dobhair, Derrybeg, has 22,000 items of stock and features the Donegal County Library's first ever-dedicated teenage area. It is equipped with the latest technology including; seven public access computers, Wi-Fi, three listening stations, a self-issue unit and a computer booking system.





It also features a bright and colourful children's library, two public meeting rooms and study areas. There is plenty of space simply to sit and relax, read a newspaper or listen to music or learn a new language. Other special services include reading assistant software package, Kurzweil, JAWS accessibility equipment for the visually impaired and access to an Ebook reader.

Leabharlann Phobail Gaoth Dobhair is the regional library for the Gaeltacht area of West Donegal and will take a lead role in supporting and developing a community that has a pride and respect for the Irish language and culture. The library has the most comprehensive collection of Irish books in the County. Staff in Leabharlann Gaoth Dobhair will promote and develop services and library collections through the medium of Irish.

The new library replaces the library's former site in the old chapel, which was destroyed in flash flooding in June 2009. County Librarian, Eileen Burgess says, *'I am delighted that after years of planning that the new Leabharlann Phobail Ghaoth Dobhair is open for business. Donegal libraries attract over 6,000 visits per week. We know that the addition of this new library will attract even more. With all these new resources it is anticipated that the library will quickly become a destination for children, adults and the whole community. We look forward to welcoming everyone to this beautiful brand new library.'*

Donegal County Council would like to acknowledge grant aid received from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and also the resources provided by Údarás na Gaeltachta which allowed this library project to come to fruition.

Great Writing Great Places

Great Writing Great Places brings writers and audiences to unusual venues across the Dublin city. *Dublin UNESCO City of Literature* and writing.ie are organising readings in venues which hold special significance to the authors' writings.



To date, there have been tales of emigration and loss on the Jeanie Johnson famine ship, tales of inspiration and determination in the home of Jonathan Swift and stories of romance in Whitefriar Street Church (resting place of St. Valentine). November will see works of Irish writers buried in Glasnevin Cemetery performed at Glasnevin Museum, the atmospheric environs of The Four Courts to hear crime writers Declan Hughes, Stuart Neville, Niamh O'Connor and Arlene Hunt. For all those who like to savour their coffee on Saturday mornings, writers Claudia Carroll, Sheila O'Flanagan and Sinéad Moriarty in the *Lost Society Café*.

During November mid-term break, children will be invited into the deep, dark depths of the crypt at Christ Church Cathedral where author Eithne Massey will tell her terrifying tales. Details of dates and events can be checked on www.dublincityofliterature.ie or www.writing.ie

News from Kilkenny Libraries...

■ All Ireland Poetry Day

The Galway poet, Rita Kelly was in Kilkenny City Library for All Ireland Poetry Day. To start the day she held a *Fun with Language* workshop for 4th, 5th and 6th classes from Johnswell National School.

She based her workshop on the structure of words and the story behind each name/word. She gave examples of the origins of telephone, Schumacher and Volkswagen. At lunchtime she read some of her recent poems to an interested adult group, including *Chess*, *Best wishes in the 20th Century* and *The New Alphabet*.



Rita invited some of the audience to share their poetry with the audience and Anne Murphy recited *Dio Te Amo* and *Cut to the Chase*. Michael Massey read *Highground* and *The Incredible Shrinking Man*. Topics covered in other poems included ghost estates, a lyric on family history.

■ The Year of Craft and the Children's Book Festival in Kilkenny

The year of Craft was celebrated during the Children's Book Festival when the Kilkenny Library Service and the National Craft Gallery got together for a papercraft workshop with the 4th, 5th and 6th classes from the Presentation Convent, Parnell Street. Caroline Ryan facilitated the workshop which centred around a poem the children had read. The children received a tour of the Gallery from Sinead Quinn, Education and Outreach Assistant who explained the exhibition 'Modified Expressions' to them. The children then made their own version of the exhibition by interpreting their poem in papercraft. This was the first time most of the children had been to the Gallery but not the last judging by their enthusiasm.



Remembering Feis Chluainín Uí Ruairc after 50 years ago

Manorhamilton Library organised a unique event to celebrate the last Feis Chluainín which was held fifty years ago on **June 18 1961**. This annual Feis was a hugely popular event and the prize winners were representatives of many counties.

Although it was an event that enjoyed massive support down the years, and entries for 1961 were well up on the previous years, it seems that this was the last ever Feis Chluainín Uí Ruairc and, for some reason, the prize winners of that year never received their medals.



Pictured at the presentation of Feis Chluainín Uí Ruairc medals [Back row (l-r)] Sean O Suilleabháin, County Librarian, Noel McMahon, Dromahair, Rosaleen Maloney, Sligo, Valerie Somers, Sligo, Attracta Burns, Cork, Ann Blunnie, Carrick-On-Shannon, Roisin Mulcahy, Bantry, Tess Grehan, Dublin, Rena Gallogly, Sligo, Pdraig McManus, Sligo. [Front row (l-r)], Margaret Sweeney, Mayo, Philomena Rooney, Manorhamilton, Caroline Farrell, Librarian, Manorhamilton Library, Helen Manus, Sligo, Mary Rooney, Sligo, and Rita O'Malley, Dublin

To Commemorate 50 years from the last Feis Chluainín Uí Ruairc a unique celebration took place in Manorhamilton library on June 24 2011 as the winners of the 1961 Feis Chluainín were presented with their prizes.

Leitrim Library Service extended an invitation to the prizewinners of 1961, past committee members of Feis Chluainín and people of the region to attend the celebration in Manorhamilton Library and, on the night, the prize winners, many of whom travelled long distances, were finally presented with their medals fifty years later.

Remembered also on the night was the late Tomás Ó Duibhir, a native of Riverstown, Co. Sligo, who was one of the main promoters of the Manorhamilton Feis. Tomás and his late wife, Agnes, took a deep interest in matters relating to Irish culture. Tomás Ó Duibhir's work as Rúnaí na Feise ensured the success of Feis Chluainín for many years.

Following the death of Tomás some years ago, material which he held was donated to Leitrim County Library by his son Micheál and is now housed in Leitrim's Local Studies department in Ballinamore. The collection consists of minute books, correspondence, annual programmes and speeches, brochures, financial reports, and committee information. Included in this material were the medals for the 1961 Feis which were in their original envelopes with the names of the prize winners on them.

This event was followed by light refreshments and food and the evening's programme finished with a talk and reminiscences of the days of Feis Chluainín Uí Ruairc. The event was featured on the RTE news programme on the same night.

Top architectural body honours Ballymahon library

The newly redesigned Ballymahon library has received a glowing recommendation from one of the country's leading architectural bodies.

Experts from the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland singled out the library in its *Conservation/Restoration* Category Architecture Awards for 2011, earmarking its much changed and modern design structure as reasons for its inclusion. The former market house, founded in 1819, recently underwent a €1.5m facelift, culminating in its eventual re-opening to the general public in January. Computer facilities as well as extensive lending and reference sections now span much of the library's ground floor layout alongside a soft seating area with, magazines and newspapers. Above, on the first floor is a large community hall, which doubles as a local studies room, complemented by two smaller meeting rooms



The newly refurbished Library was officially opened on Friday February 18 2011 by Longford County mayor, Cllr. Paul Connell and Deputy Peter Kelly, T.D.

'Dylan at Seventy' celebrated in Mayo Libraries

Legendary American singer songwriter, Bob Dylan turned 70 this year and to mark the occasion Castlebar and Ballina Libraries were delighted to host an exhibition of Bob Dylan memorabilia entitled *Happy Birthday Mr. Bob!*

The exhibition featured many mementos of Bob Dylan's career including a ticket from his first show in Ireland in 1966, handwritten lyrics and poetry, artwork and bootlegs as well as countless other

items collected by broadcaster and journalist, Liam McNally, over the years. Mr. McNally generously loaned Mayo Library his collection to mark Dylan's 70th year and a remarkable career spanning 50 years.

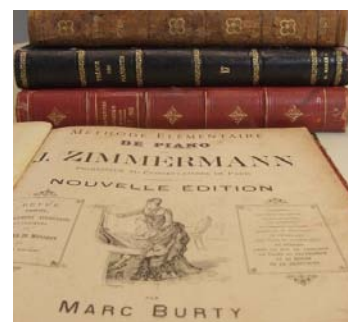


News from NUI Maynooth Library...

■ Acquisition of Music Library of French Composer Gabriel Baille

NUI Maynooth Library is delighted to add the music library of renowned French musician Gabriel Baille (1832-1909) to its exceptional research collections.

Gabriel Baille was at the centre of musical life in the French city of Perpignan. He composed for organ, piano, orchestra and mixed choir. His music library, of 81 volumes, contains much of interest to NUI Maynooth and St. Patrick's College Maynooth, particularly with regard to 19th century French editions of instrumental methods, organ music and sacred music.



■ Kindles at NUI Maynooth Library



The Library at NUI Maynooth is piloting an exciting new Kindle service enabling students to borrow multiple books on one handy, portable device.

Students enrolled on History, English and Business modules can borrow Kindles pre-loaded with core text material. The Library is hoping to expand this service in the future to meet student demand, which has so far proven to be very high, from across the whole student cohort.

No worries, it's only Rocket Science!

More than sixty participants attended ***The God Particle and the Particle Zoo***, the first in a winter series of talks and workshops on discovery and modern science being held in Wexford town library.



This new programming stream is being piloted in one location now and will roll out countywide from early 2012. The objective is to create places and occasions for people to discuss and study science at a popular level, comparable with the many opportunities that already exist for people interested in for example literature or sports.

The first lecture explored sub atomic particle physics and the current work of the Large Hadron Collider at CERN Switzerland. Attendance was divided almost equally between men and women and across all age ranges from teens to people in their 70s. Up to 1/3 were non members. The quality and range of questioning after the talk was very satisfactory.

Science programming for children has been developing in County Wexford Libraries over the past five years: we are delighted now to have achieved a parallel sustainable stream for adults. More information from Nicola.mcgrath@wexfordcoco.ie

Recommendation on Digitisation and Digital Preservation

The European Commission has just adopted a Recommendation on Digitisation and Digital Preservation, asking Member States to step up their efforts, pool their resources and involve private actors in digitising cultural material and make it available through Europeana.

In particular, the Recommendation invites Member States to:

- put in place solid plans for their investments in digitisation and foster public-private partnerships to share the gigantic cost of digitisation (recently estimated at 100 billion EUR). The Recommendation spells out key principles to ensure that such partnerships are fair and balanced.
- make available through Europeana 30 million objects by 2015, including all Europe's masterpieces which are no longer protected by copyright, and all material digitised with public funding.
- get more in-copyright material online, by, for example, creating the legal framework conditions enabling large-scale digitisation and cross-border accessibility of out-of-commerce works.

- reinforce their strategies and adapt their legislation to ensure long-term preservation of digital material, by, for example, ensuring the material deposited is not protected by technical measures that impede librarians from preserving it.

The Recommendation is an update of a first recommendation adopted in 2006. It takes account of Member States progress reports from 2008 and 2010, which show, that although progress has been made, more and better action is needed as regards financial resources, quantitative targets for digitisation and solid support for Europeana. It also builds on the conclusions of the '*Comité des Sages*' on bringing Europe's cultural heritage online, appointed by Commissioners Kroes and Vassiliou in 2010.

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Contributions to *Irish Library News* and / or www.library.ie should be sent to,
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2011 has been designated European Year of Volunteering.