Archives & Records Association
Cumann Cartlann agus Taifead
Ireland/Éire

Winter 2018 Newsletter

Inside this issue:

Happy Christmas and New Year from ARA Ireland	1
Sowing a Seed: Archives to Art at Galway County Council Archives	2
Derry City Cemetery - a volunteer digitisation project	5
The River Lagan: an archival journey	7
Celebrating Archives and Performing Arts: A visit from APAC to Ireland	10
Explore Your Archive 2018	13
Property Registry Authority: First World War Commemoration	16
The Peace at Home Exhibition: Dublin after the First World War	18
ESB Archives launch Film Archive	21

Happy Christmas and New Year from ARA Ireland!

Dear Member,

Welcome to the winter 2018 edition of the ARA Ireland newsletter. We hope you all had a great year!

We would like to thank all of our members who attended ARA Ireland events and training days this year and look forward to seeing you at our events in 2019. Thank you also to all of the contributors to the newsletter in 2018 – we couldn't do it without you!

We hope you all have a lovely Christmas and New Year.

ARA Ireland Committee

Sowing a Seed: Archives to Art at Galway County Council Archives

Bridging a gap between the past and the present

Patria McWalter, Archivist, Galway County Council Archives

A subtle and compelling Sowing a Seed: Archives to Art exhibition, the result of an exciting collaboration between Galway County Council Archives and six artists, opened in Tuam Library in October and ran for three weeks.

Genesis of the initiative began with the availability of funding under the Creative Ireland /Galway County Council Cultural and Creativity Strategy, 2018-2022, and with Galway County Council Archives' wish to refresh its outreach strategy and to bring the archives into the general public view. The Archives invited the most vibrant and creative people within our society, those involved in our arts community, to join in a collaborative project. Aside from promoting the Archives' rich and varied collections, highlighting their varied intrinsic value to the arts community and society in general, the Archives hoped that the project would offer support and mentorship to the artists involved, providing them with an opportunity to network with Galway County Council Archives and the wider community.

In early summer 2018 six artists based in county Galway, selected through open call, where invited to explore, visually interpret and re-imagine specific archival material. The Archives had selected four wonderful items from its collection for the project, ranging in date from 1722 to 1866. The items represent landed estate business, personal issues, and the design and layout of a public institution. The material is of varying textures, such as paper and parchment, and sizes, and each has an interesting content and context.

The oldest item chosen for the project is a 1722 map (G00/4/46), with a colour border, detailing some lands of the Kelly Estate in north-east Galway. It is annexed to a 1755 lease on parchment, between John Kelly, of Aghrane, county Galway and Robert Walter, of Rookwood, county Galway, pertaining to lands of Corrobegg, Aragthy, on the Roscommon border, comprised of 498 acres.



Image from the Mansergh St George volume (GS01/5)

The next item chosen was the beautiful leather-bound manuscript volume (GS01/5) with thirty-two hand-coloured estate maps and descriptions of the land of Richard St George Mansergh St George of Headford, together with details of tenants. It was compiled by the surveyor Charles Frizell (1737-1812) in 1775. It also includes a rent

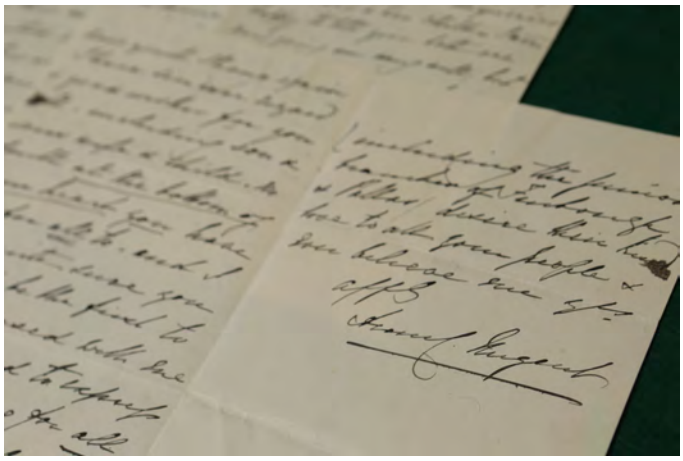
roll for the town of Headford. The pictorial maps show the layout of individual farms, the position of adjacent farms and location of additional features such as houses, bogs, rivers, trees and so on.



Treadmill by Joan Finnegan, in response to the Galway Gaol drawings.

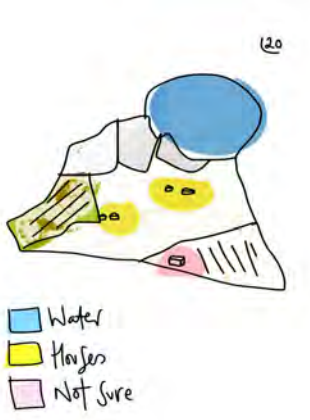
A set of drawings relating to the County Galway Gaol and County Town Gaol (GS11/02) was another intriguing inclusion in the project. Among the plans and drawings, dating from 1830 to 1866, is a drawing of a treadmill (1864), and others relating to a proposed amalgamation of the gaols (1866). Many of the drawings were signed by the County Surveyor, Samuel Roberts.

The last item included, is an undated poignant holograph letter from [Francis] Nugent (Pallas) to Georgina Lawrence of Lawrencetown, (GP1/10). It primarily relates to the pre-mature birth of his grandson, '…we had scarcely a hope of saving the child and were even very uneasy about Mary…. The child is the most ridiculously small atom I ever saw, but with great care we may bring it through, the first day none of us expected it to live…'.



Lawarence letter, c 1858, GP1/10

The artists were introduced to the archives at a one day workshop and were invited to view and examine the material. They were provided with details on the provenance of the items and the history of the family or institution it represented. They were challenged with bringing the specific archives 'alive', bridging the gap between the past and the present, using processes intrinsic to their individual arts practice.



Shapes from the Past, No. 20, Gala Tomaso

The artists, Joan Finnegan, Kathleen Furey, Lisa-Marie Manthey, Selma Makela, Gala Tomasso and Carmel Tynan, responded to the challenge with great enthusiasm, each bringing their own unique interpretation, vision and skill to the project. They

The artists produced distinct and imaginative pieces which reflect how the archives intrigued, touched or spoke to each of them individually. They brought their unique talents and insightfulness to what was a wonderful, varied and exciting interpretation of archives, history and the specific records themselves. Artist Kathleen Furey said “she appreciated the opportunity to see the archive material at first hand, and was interested in working with the archives as they can contain layers of meaning, stories and possibilities beyond the immediate content that they hold. They contain traces to which artists can respond”.

Meanwhile the project has whetted Joan Finnegan’s appetite for more history, particularly Galway history. “It has opened my eyes and has got my curiosity going for all the stories behind all the old places around. With the Gaol, one story leads to another and I have found the whole experience just wonderful”.



Left to right: Lisa-Marie Manthey, Patria McWalter (Galway County Council, Archivist & project co-ordinator), Gala Tomasso, Carmel Tynan, Cllr Peter Keaveney, Leas Chathaoirleach of the county of Galway, Selma Makela, Joan Finnegan, Kathleen Furey, and Joanna McGlynn (curator).

The artists vibrant and varied work representing this unique collaboration between artist, archive and community culminated in the Sowing a Seed: Archives to Art exhibition which was launched by Councillor Peter Keaveney, Leas Chathaoirleach of the County of Galway on 19th October. Guest speaker, Dr Éimear O’ Connor HRHA, curator, art historian, RHA archivist and Research Associate with the Humanities Institute, UCD, gave the keynote address. The exhibition was curated by arts facilitator Joanna McGlynn.

An attractive catalogue documents the project, as does a short film which is available on YouTube at https://youtu.be/jQdlK_L63VM and through the Archives web-site at www.galway.ie/archives/exhibitions. Both the catalogue and video include valuable insights into how the artists approached the project and how the archives influenced their response to produce visual elements to the stories in the archives.



Some of the project catalogues

The exhibition ran for three weeks, and during that time received wide media coverage, both in print and radio. The Archives to Art project definitely appears to have achieved what the Archives had hoped for; touching the imagination of visitors as much as the archives touched the participants, all of whom archivist Patria McWalter is confident are now ‘ambassadors for the archives’!

Derry City Cemetery – a volunteer digitisation project

Ronan McConnell, Education Officer & Bernadette Walsh, Archivist, Museum Service of Derry City & Strabane District Council

Creating access to archives is one, if not the most important, of our objectives in the Museum Service of Derry City and Strabane District Council. There has long been a desire across the city to create improved access to the city's cemetery records, in paper format they were cumbersome, fragile and sometimes inaccessible. In particular a focus was on Derry City Cemetery, which opened in 1853 and for the following hundred years, until the early 1960s, it was the main burial place for both Protestants and Catholics in the city. This community burial plot tells the story of Derry. It was the community, in particular the North of Ireland Family History Society (Foyle Branch), the U3A and Guildhall Press, which galvanised support alongside the Council's museum and archive staff to develop a volunteer project that would create digital access to these records.

Within the grounds of the cemetery lies the stories of unmarked pauper graves, the 19th century cholera outbreaks, the maritime heritage of the city though its merchant class, the First World War, the Second World War, the Troubles as well as the general community of the city. A search for a burial plot, whether marked by a headstone or not, is central to the quest of many people tracing their roots.

In 2016, the Tower Museum called on members of the public to help preserve and record the valuable burial registers of the City Cemetery by contributing to an exciting new database holding the historic burial records. Since the project began in May 2016, over 40 volunteers have helped to transcribe and verify over 36,000 entries from the Cemetery's Burial Registers. Following dedicated training, the volunteers were able to complete the work from their own homes. All the records have been now been transcribed and are now searchable online for free. This was a project by the people, for the people.



Derry City Cemetery

The cemetery records, which date from 1853, chart the information of all those buried in the cemetery up until 1924. The records detail not only the names of those buried in the cemetery, but also their age, their place of birth and who their parents were, amongst other valuable genealogical information. Most importantly for those trying to trace their ancestry, they also reveal the location of the grave within the large cemetery site.

In November 2018 the project was shortlisted for

the Heritage Angel Awards, for Best Research, Interpretation and Recording category, and was subsequently Highly Commended in its category. The museum and archive staff intend to develop this project and discussions are currently taking place as to what other cemetery records are available. Projects like this are essential to the archive sector, without volunteers, dedicated staff and available records so many of our local history records would not be accessible.

http://www.derrystrabane.com/Subsites/Museums-and-Heritage/City-Cemetery-Records-Project

The River Lagan: an archival journey

Brett Irwin, Archivist, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland



The River Lagan at Edenderry, 1890.

Her father sails a running-barge twixt Lambeg and the Drum;

And on the lonely river-marge, she clears his hearth for him.

When she was only fairy-high, her gentle mother died;

But dew-love keeps her memory green on the Lagan side.

- My Lagan Love, Joseph Campbell

From its source at Sleive Croob in the Dromara hills, to the deep waters of Belfast Lough, the river Lagan flows ever onwards. A river of song and myth, it also powered the mills and foundries that helped create the wealth of Belfast and much of Ulster. The Lagan flows through some of the most important towns that helped to create Linenpolis –the largest centre of linen in the world- by goods reaching the port of Belfast via the river, and then out to global markets.

Dromara, Dromore, Waringstown, Moira and Lisburn are all towns that still retain evidence of how the river Lagan has shaped the industrial past.

According to the Irish Linen Museum, Barbour mill at Hilden near Lisburn required 200 tons of coal per week and 100 tons of flax for the 30,000 spindles that were operating in the 1890s. The massive mill accommodated the largest manufacturers in the world of tailors, threads and shoemakers. The mill finally closed in 2006. Now, the colossus sits quietly and slowly decays to the ever-present gentle sound of the river flowing by.



Plan of the Lagan with the lock at Stranmillis, 1840.

The river and surrounding hinterlands are steeped in history and a few fascinating characters have had connections to the Lagan. Did you know that Shaw's Bridge, just outside Belfast, was built by a Captain John Shaw to get Oliver Cromwell's guns over the Lagan during

the New Model Army's campaign in Ulster in 1649? Another interesting connection to the Lagan is the time when Huguenot Protestant's, fleeing religious persecution in France, brought to Ulster expertise in weaving and are credited with improving the quality of Irish linen. In 1696 Louis Crommelin was appointed by William III as Overseer of the Royal Linen Manufacture in Ireland. In Lisburn, the site of the 18th Century French Huguenot Church is now the renowned Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum. A lesser-known association is of Lisburn-born St Clair Mulholland. Colonel Mulholland fought with the Union Army and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honour during the American Civil War battle of Chancellorsville in 1864. His father was a Lagan river merchant.



Plan of the Lagan from Lisburn to Drumbeg, 1840.

The Lagan Canal

In 1756 work began on the Lagan Canal. This was to make navigation possible between Lough Neagh and Belfast and was part of grand designs to promote river barge transport above all others. Coal, linen and other goods could be transported to Belfast and freight coming back could be dispersed all over Ireland from the network of waterways that converged on Lough Neagh. The main finance for building the canal came from the family of Arthur Chichester, the third Earl of Donegall. Additional money came from local taxes and grants from the Dublin parliament. The first stretch of the canal from Belfast to Lisburn was engineered by a Dutchman named Thomas Omer.



Working on the river boats could be a family business, 1900.

In 1820 a fully-loaded lighter (river barge) leaving Lough Neagh took 14 hours to travel to Lisburn and a further 14 to reach the ships at Belfast. Lisburn was without doubt the most important port on the navigation route as it had dry docks and a very busy harbour. In 1763 the Lord Hertford was the first barge to make the journey between Belfast and Lisburn and effectively opened the canal.

After the Second World War, competition from the railways and road traffic began to bite and the canal was no longer financially viable. The canal was officially closed in 1958. Today, the section of the river Lagan between Lisburn and Belfast is now known as the Lagan Valley Regional Park. The area was granted regional park status in 1967 and was the first regional park in Northern Ireland. Although the 'lighters' have ceased their journeys long ago, walkers

and cyclists continue to enjoy the river path, the beautiful countryside and the ever-flowing river Lagan.



A Lagan boat leaving Stranmillis, 1900.

All archival material in this article is open to the public and used with the permission of the Deputy Keeper of Records, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

Celebrating Archives and Performing Arts – A visit from APAC to Ireland

Mary Clark, Dublin City Library & Archive and Eilís McCarthy, Dublin Theatre Archive



Mary Clark and Eilís McCarthy (centre) with APAC delegates and speaker Conor Doyle

The Association of Performing Arts Collections (APAC) is the membership organisation for professionals, specialists, and other individuals working with or interested in performing arts heritage in the United Kingdom and Ireland. APAC offers meetings, visits, symposia, study days, an email forum, working groups, and collaborative projects. APAC advocates the widest possible engagement in performing arts heritage collections by the general public. It is the UK's Subject Specialist Network for performing arts and has close links with SIBMAS, the international association for this sector.

APAC's first visit to Ireland took place in November 2018. The group, led by Ramona Riedzewski, visited Dublin City Library & Archive (Thursday 8 November) and NUI Galway (Friday 9 November) both of which are members of APAC. Delegates represented the Victoria and Albert Museum; Queen Mary's College, University of London; and Rambert at 90.



Theatre Archivist Eilís McCarthy with items from Anna Manahan Collection

At Pearse Street, City Archivist Mary Clark outlined the exciting plans for the Dublin Theatre Archive which is presently held in DCLA. The Theatre Archive contains c.300 collections ranging from the mid-19th century to the 21st century and it is mediated to the public through cataloguing, digitisation, publications, exhibitions – both virtual

and actual – and of course performances. When the new City Library opens in Parnell Square in the coming years, the Theatre Archive will move there, and two purpose-built strongrooms are being designed to accommodate it. There will also be a full-time permanent Theatre Archivist, who will play a dynamic role alongside the Music Library and literary events in creating a nexus of performance and participation for the public to enjoy.



Delegates inspect elements of Anna Manahan Collection

Three presentations then followed. Our Cataloguing Theatre Archivist, Eilís McCarthy, presented a display of original material from the Anna Manahan Collection which she recently finished cataloguing. The range of material highlighted the research opportunities to be found within the collection, including the scandal of The Rose Tattoo – a story well known in Ireland but new to our guests. This prompted a lively discussion about censorship then and now and the very different causes of scandal in the 21st century. We then had two presentations, both given by individuals who had donated collections to the Theatre Archive. Cecil Allen spoke about the Queen's Theatre Dublin, which was managed by his grandfather Ira Allen. Born in 1879, Ira Allen was a producer, director, actor and playwright. He wrote many plays including; Ye Merry Robbers or The Bottle Imp, Robert Emmet, Father Murphy and Tara's Halls. Allen toured Ireland with his theatre company and also performed in Dublin where he usually appeared at the Queen's Theatre. Allen was married to the actress May Murnane, who performed alongside him in many of his productions. His early death at the age of only 48 meant that the Queen's was without its leader, and apart from a period when it was occupied by the Abbey after their theatre was destroyed by fire, the Queen's had lost its way, and it closed in 1969. The next speaker was Conor Doyle, nephew of Ursula Doyle and godson to her husband, the famous comic actor Jimmy O'Dea. Conor began work on Dublin's Theatre Royal as a talk for Dublin City Council's City Hall Lunchtime Lectures in 2012. He continued to develop it over the next couple of years while he was working for NEAR FM and produced a series on the theatre, with interviews with performers and public. His current presentation includes slides, film and audio elements, mainly covering the hey-day of the Theatre Royal (1930-50), with lively commentary by Conor. With the addition of two costumed singers and a pianist, Conor presents his show three times each year at the National Concert Hall.



Cecil Allen silhouetted against images of his grandparents, Ira Allen and May Murnane

A delicious lunch then followed, courtesy of Dublin City Council, after which Assistant Archivist Stephanie Rousseau led the way to Trinity College Dublin, where Ramona had arranged for a short – and free! tour of the Long Room. Archivist Dáire Rooney, from TCD's Manuscript Room, very kindly spoke about the Rough Magic Theatre Collection held there and showed the group a selection of material from the collection. Dáire spoke about developing a relationship with the company and the practicalities of working with the archives of a 'living' company. The final visit of the day was to Dublin's City Hall where the Theatre Archive's exhibition 'Mac Liammoir and the Dublin Gate Theatre' was on display to mark that theatre's 90th anniversary. Curator Mary Clark gave a tour of the exhibition to the visitors and explained that its entire contents and illustrations came from holdings in the Theatre Archive at DCLA. While original materials were only displayed in Pearse Street, the exhibition has been printed on fourteen large-scale boards to allow it to tour around Dublin in the New Year, along with its accompanying audio-visual displays.



Conor Doyle with Dublin's fourth Theatre Royal

This brought us to 5.00 p.m. and as the delegates had an early start the next day to get to Galway, they headed off – enthusing most of all about the delicious lunch! We enjoyed their company and learned a lot from our conversations during the day.

Explore Your Archive 2018

Joanne Carroll and Niamh Ní Charra, ARA Ireland



EYA Campaign ambassador Anne Cassin, with Gerard Byrne (Chair) and Joanne Carroll (Campaigns Officer) from ARA, Ireland Committee in Dun's Library of the Royal College of Physicians, Ireland.

Explore Your Archive launch week took place this year from 17th – 25th November, with great participation from archives and archivists across Ireland. The launch took place in the National Library of Ireland with speeches from Gerard Byrne (ARA Iireland Chair) who gave an overview of the campaign; Joanne Rothwell from the Irish Archives Resource who promoted the great new blog from IAR; Karl Magee, Chair of the ARA Board who provided information on the work of the Archives and Records Association, the ARA Conference in Glasgow and the resulting Glasgow Manifesto; and finally, campaign ambassador Anne Cassin who spoke about her work on RTÉ's Nationwide, and how archives have impacted on and informed her work.



'Archi've Revealed' customised poster from OMARC: OPW-Maynooth University Archive & Research Centre at Castletown

We had great coverage of the campaign online, on radio and in print; with mentions in The Times (Ireland), the Irish Daily Star, The Irish Times and even a mention by Anne Cassin on the Today Show with Maura and Dáithí. In addition, ARA, Ireland Communications Officer, Niamh Ní Charra, appeared on Near FM, Phoenix FM and The History Show on RTÉ Radio One to promote the campaign and the various events happening across the country. Niamh also handled promotion

on social media throughout the campaign (see below).



Events

There were many events held this year ranging from lectures, exhibitions and performances; here's a taste of some of the events that took place over launch week:

Cork City and County Archives held an exhibition including original and facsimile manuscripts from the personal archive of one of Cork's most interesting historical figures, Denny Lane (1818 - 1895). PRONI held a variety of events during the launch week including a lecture on refugee records held by the record office, and a conference on the 1918 election. Some videos of PRONI's events can be found on their You Tube channel. The Irish Traditional Music Archive also held a series of interesting events called 'Within a Mile of Dublin'; a three part live radio broadcast on Near FM, featuring performances by and interviews of well-known local artists which brought a selection of their archival collections to life. You can also catch up with these broadcasts here.



Daguerreotype of Denny Lane, used in 'Denny Lane, Renaissance Man' Exhibition in Cork City and County Archives

Featured archives

This year the Explore Your Archive website hosted some 'Featured Archives' with participation from a variety of archives and organisations showcasing individuals, collections and exhibitions. You can find more on 'Featured Archives' here.

Social media

As mentioned previously, our Communications officer, Niamh Ní Charra made extensive use of social media to promote the Explore Your Archives campaign, both prior to and throughout the week. This consisted of highlighting events daily both on

Twitter and Facebook, sharing Irish archives' own social media announcements relating to the campaign, announcing the campaign's daily hashtags and sharing posts relating to them. Engagement on social media was fantastic and the daily hashtags trended in Ireland every day, reaching number 2 in Ireland for the always popular #hairyarchives. In total approximately 600 tweets were posted or shared during the week, which were themselves liked or retweeted by others and we had almost 2,500 profile visits.



Tweet sent by Irish Railway Record Society (@irishrailways) for #HairyArchives

Thank you

On behalf of the ARA Ireland committee we would like to extend a huge thanks to everyone who took part in the Explore Your Archive 2018 campaign. This is a campaign owned by the sector itself so it wouldn't happen without your help and participation. Whether you created an exhibition, a 'Featured Archive', held a lecture or conference, or tweeted and facebooked through the week, the success of the campaign is because of all your efforts, so well done!

CUARDAIGH DO CHARTLANN

EXPLORE YOUR ARCHIVE

Property Registry Authority: First World War Commemoration

Ellen Murphy, Archives Manager, Property Registration Authority of Ireland

On 09 November 2018 two wreath laying ceremonies were held by the Property Registration Authority of Ireland to mark the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day and to remember the fifteen men from the Land Registry and the Registry of Deeds who were killed in action during the First World War. The event was attended by staff, representatives of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association (RDFA) & Leinster Regiment Association Ireland (LRA, I), and relatives of some of the men who died.



Walter Hemmens is shown employee records relating to his relative William F. Bassett by archives manager Ellen Murphy & chief executive Liz Pope.

Events began at the Registry of Deed when Walter Hemmens was shown employee records of his grand uncle William F. Bassett. Bassett was born in Waterford in 1883 and was appointed to the Registry of Deeds in 1905. A part-time reservist since 1908, he volunteered for active service at outbreak of First World War. He served initially in Salonika, Greece before promotion to lieutenant & transfer to 2/10th Royal Scots. He was awarded a Military Cross for Bravery. He died in Russia, 27 October 1918, two weeks before Armistice. Poignantly news of Walter's death reached the Registry of Deeds Office on 11 November 1918, the same date the armistice was announced.

The official ceremony opened with a welcome address by Chief Executive Liz Pope who spoke about the personal experiences of the staff from Registry of Deeds and Land Registry who served in First World War and the devastating impact their death had on their families, friends and colleagues in Dublin. Brian Moroney representing the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association spoke movingly on the importance of remembrance of the First World War for the island of Ireland. Over 210,000 Irish men joined the British Forces, and over 49000 men from Irish Regiments were killed during the four year conflict.



Group picture of attendees at Armistice Commemoration Event

Philip Lecane (RDFA) and Kieran Carey (staff) than laid a wreath at the Registry of Deeds Memorial plaque whilst Emily Moore (staff) read names and date of death of the six men from Deeds

who were killed. Walter Hemmens, who had travelled especially from the UK to participate in the ceremony read the beautiful poem by Laurence Binyon “For the Fallen”. Following this the group moved to Chancery Street and a wreath was laid at the Land Registry Memorial plaque by Adrian Bradley (staff) and John Hollinsworth, (LRA, I). The names and date of death of nine men killed were read by Eilish Moroney (staff) followed by one minute of silence.



The Memorial Plaque at Registry of Deeds, Henerietta Street, D2

As well as the 15 men killed, approximately 75 other men from the Registry of Deeds and Land Registry enlisted in the British Army during the First World War. Many of them were encouraged to enlist by the efforts of Francis H Browning who was an Examiner of Titles at the Land Registry and founded the volunteer corps D Company of the 7th Batallion, Royal Dublin Fusiliers at Lansdowne Road (also known as “The Pals of Suvla Bay”). The men who survived returned to an Ireland that was very different from when they departed. In 2019, the Property Registration Authority will be publishing additional information about their experiences on www.prai.ie as part of the Decade of Centenary commemorations.

The Armistice Commemoration event was co-ordinated by Ellen Murphy who was recently appointed by The Property Registration Authority of Ireland as the first dedicated archives manager to the Registry of Deeds. The Registry of Deeds contains records dating back to its foundation by an Act of Parliament in 1707 which are of immense historical, cultural and genealogical significance.

Further info: ellen.murphy@prai.ie

The Peace at Home Exhibition: Dublin after the First World War

Mary Clark, Dublin City Archivist, Dublin City Library & Archive


Photograph "Irish Life."
THREE HUNDRED REPATRIATED MEN OF THE DUBLIN FUSILIERS WERE ENTERTAINED AT THE MANSION HOUSE.
The men leaving immediately before the Sinn Fein "Parliament" marched in.

Royal Dublin Fusiliers and delegates to the First Dáil cross paths at the Mansion House, 21 January 1919

Dublin City Library & Archive holds the records of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association, relating to the First World War, and comprising 130 collections. With arrangement and listing carried out, we have used these collections intensively over the past four years, in seminars, digitisation projects, Dublin City Hall lectures and in five exhibitions, all of which have been supported by Dublin City Council's Decade of Commemorations Committee. The fifth and final exhibition opened on 5 November 2018 and was intended to mark the Centenary of Armistice. However, in developing the exhibition we were anxious that it would continue to be relevant for years to come, and so we covered the lead-up to Armistice in 1918, and continued with a look at the new Ireland to which the demobilised soldiers returned.

The introduction to the exhibition provided a surprising context. The Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1919 was the independent nationalist Laurence O'Neill, who believed that the Mansion House was for everyone. Accordingly, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers were allowed to hold a lunch there for three hundred of their fellow-soldiers, former prisoners-of-war returned from Germany, and this took place in the Round Room at 12 noon on 21 January 1919. A photograph from DCLA collections showed the RDF soldiers marching away from the Mansion House following their lunch, watched on both sides by delegates waiting to enter the Round Room for the First Dáil! The old and new Ireland in startling juxtaposition.

Other themes which are explored in the exhibition include an examination of Dublin and Ireland during the Great War; Ireland in 1918; demobilisation; the so-called Spanish Flu; the fate of the RMS Leinster; housing for heroes; Guinness and the Great War; the War of Independence and the participation on both sides of veterans returned from the Great War; the Irish Civil War; and commemorations since 1918. Perhaps surprisingly, the anniversary of Armistice was celebrated enthusiastically every year in Dublin until the mid-1920s - as is vividly shown in contemporary newsreel footage, part of the exhibition's audio-visual display. The A/V also includes a photographic essay on surviving examples of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Land Trust, by Alastair Smeaton. Apart from the storyboards facing the viewer, we were asked to include over-sized imagery on the reverse, which add another

layer of interest. A huge map of Dublin, from the 1920s, is overprinted with addresses of organisations established to help demobilised soldiers. Our banner display featured giant reproductions of postcards relating to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, while covering for the 'feet' of the display frames is taken from the crest of the RDFA. Original objects from the RDFA archive are on display in the exhibition cases, including a dress uniform (so small that we have to show it on a child's mannequin – people were tiny then); regimental silverware; a wide selection of embroidered postcards, sent from the Front; medals; and – remarkably – a regimental glockenspiel, which can still be played!



Lord Mayor Nial Ring (centre) with Dr Bernard Kelly, Historian-in-Residence; Dr Mary Clark; Brendan Teeling, Acting City Librarian; Gael Scanlan, National War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge; and Tom Burke, MBE, Chairman, RDFA

While most of the images are from our collections at DCLA, we are most grateful for permission to include photographs in the exhibition from: British Pathé Archives; Diageo Guinness Archives; Fingal County Archives; National Archives, London; National Library of Ireland; North Inner City Folklore Museum, Dublin; Raidio Telefís Eireann Archives; and Trinity College Dublin.

The text and photo research were carried out by Dr Bernard Kelly, Historian-in-Residence at Dublin City Library & Archive, and an expert on the period 1914-1924. He was assisted by the City Archivist Dr Mary Clark, particularly in relation to finalizing the exhibition for placement in DCLA. Funding was provided by DCC's Commemorations Committee, mediated by Senior Librarian Tara Doyle, with production of the exhibition by Source Design and Tap Printing. Overall concept was by the Acting City Librarian Brendan Teeling, while tours of the exhibition are provided on Saturday afternoons by members of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association. As always, the exhibition was prepared as large-scale printed panels hung on our in-house display frames. These are designed to travel around Dublin and beyond afterwards, bringing the exhibition out-and-about. It will remain in DCLA until the end of January 2019 and will then move to Ballyfermot Library (February) and Dublin City Hall (March-April). If anyone would like to book the exhibition, please e-mail cityarchives@dublincity.ie – the only cost involved for borrowers is in arranging for a van to collect and return it.

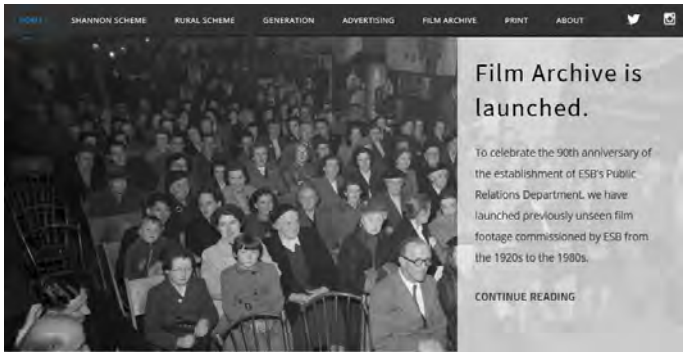


Tom Burke, MBE, Chairman, RDFA

After working so intensely on the First World War for so many years – while still working on other events in the Decade of Commemorations – it seems strange that the Great War's Centenary is finally over. That said, we are digitising and transcribing individual soldiers' diaries from the RDFA Archives for online publication in 2019. Perhaps this most cruel and pointless of wars should never be forgotten – to ensure that it should never recur.

ESB Archives launch Film Archive

Deirdre McParland, Senior Archivist, ESB Archives



Launch of film archive on www.esbarchives.ie

To celebrate the 90th anniversary of the establishment of ESB's Public Relations Department in 1928, ESB Archives have launched over fifty previously unseen films and television commercials commissioned by the company.

The film archive – hosted on www.esbarchives.ie - offers a remarkable insight into the social, cultural and economic development of Ireland from 1928 – 1992. The collection is a rich resource for academics, historians, second and third level students and genealogists to name a few. The films detail a range of topics from the Shannon Scheme, Rural Electrification, Generation Stations, Innovation, Fisheries, Consultancy Overseas, Advertising and Marketing.

The occasion of the 65th annual Public Relations Institute of Ireland's (PRII) conference in Dublin on the 29th November was chosen as the launch date of the film archive. It was a timely opportunity for ESB and PRII to celebrate their shared heritage and pay tribute to Ned Lawler (ESB Public Relations Officer 1928 – 1947) and founding member of PRII in 1953.

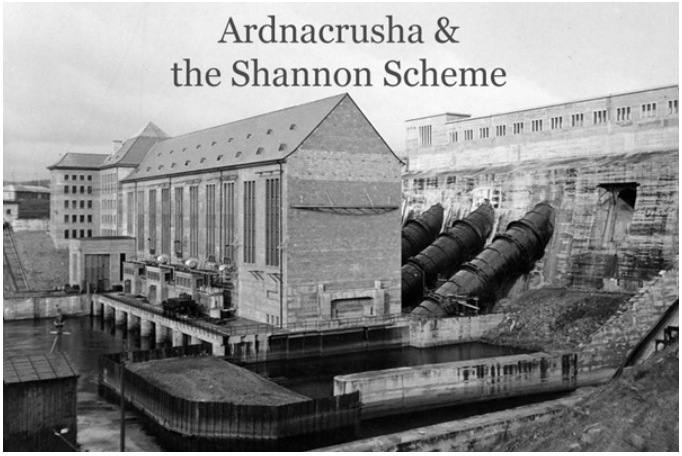
Outlining the importance of this archive to recording Ireland's history, Pat O'Doherty, Chief Executive of ESB, noted: "The films, preserved in ESB Archives, illustrate ESB's contribution in the evolution of a new and changing Ireland with many having cultural, educational, historical and social significance. The early documentaries were broadcast in cinemas or local screenings at a time before television arrived, opening Irish society to a brighter future through the electrification of the entire country. We are delighted to release the films online for everyone to enjoy from all corners of the world."



Launch of the ESB Film Archive: Left to Right, Pat O'Doherty, Chief Executive ESB, Deirdre McParland, Senior Archivist ESB, Dr. Martina Byrne, CEO Public Relations Institute of Ireland.

ESB first dipped its toes into the film world when they entered an agreement in April 1928 with the First National Pathé Film Company to record the construction of Ireland's first hydroelectric station on the River Shannon at Ardnacrusha in Co Clare.

The film was subsequently shown in cinemas, schools and colleges nationwide. Its purpose was to educate the country on the importance of the largest engineering projects of its kind in Europe and the transformative benefits of electricity to industry and society.



From the 1950s to 1980s, ESB employed the services of acclaimed Austrian filmmaker George Fleischmann who incidentally crash landed in Ireland while on a surveillance mission during World War II. Interned at the Curragh Camp, he produced fifteen films for ESB throughout this period.

The first of the documentaries produced in 1955 by Fleischmann, 'Power for Progress', narrated by the broadcaster Eamonn Andrews details the extraordinary contribution of ESB to Irish society from its foundation in 1927 to 1955. In addition to footage of ESB's various hydro, peat and coal stations the documentary provides footage of domestic scenes from the 1950s and the benefits of the all-electric house. Social insights are explored through footage of industrial and commercial activity throughout Ireland. Views of the original Georgian landscape on Fitzwilliam Street provide architectural views before the re-development of ESB's Head Office in the 1960s.

The documentary 'More Power to the Farmer' produced in 1957, eleven years into the Rural Electrification Scheme featured the Irish actor John Cowley who later starred in the television series, The Riordans. The documentary details the impactful story of rural electrification throughout this transformative time in Irish history, described as the greatest social revolution in Ireland since the land reforms of the 1880s.



A fictional dramatisation of the story of a young farmer who lived beside Portarlington Peat Station in the early 1950s offers an understanding of the fascination and scepticism surrounding the new peat station and electricity generation. It also provides rare footage of Bord na Móna's peat railways servicing the power station. As many generation stations have a limited life cycle, this film illustrates the operations of a peat station, now demolished, with internal and external footage of the station ensuring that our industrial heritage is preserved.

The 1961 colour film 'Modern Living Country Style' filmed at the RDS on the occasion of the Horse Show features the journalist and the first female Lord Mayor of Limerick City, Francis Condell,

demonstrating the most modern country home equipped with new electric appliances transforming the lives of Irish housewives through innovative design.

On a futuristic theme, the documentary ‘Power for Tomorrow’ produced in 1968, explores the countless benefits that electricity has brought to everyday life in Ireland opening with scenes from Dublin Airport’s Air Traffic Control.

ESB employees were a regular feature in many of the documentaries, in particular, the 1972 documentary on Turlough Hill, Co. Wicklow, ‘Peak Power’ is dedicated entirely to the workers. It features interviews with the employees who contributed to the largest pumped storage civil engineering project of its time.

The award winning 1992 film, ‘24 Hours’ profiled ESB’s commitment to customer service and depicted a typical working day for ESB staff throughout the company. The narrated footage described the role of ESB in supplying power to run the nation, bringing light, heat and power to 1 million Irish homes as well as commercial and public premises. The film won a gold medal at the 35th New York Annual Festival. The US International Film and Video Festival was one of the longest established and most prestigious world events, honouring excellence in industrial and educational audio visual communication.

For researchers interested in the more detailed technical aspects of engineering projects, the 1975 documentary 'Turlough Hill, Peak Power' and the 1985 documentary 'Moneypoint Power from Coal' detail the mammoth construction of both generation stations and the logistics required. Filmed over the construction years, the documentaries capture significant milestones throughout the projects.



Footage extends beyond Irish shores, with the 1982 film, ‘Partners in Power’ showcasing ESB’s consultancy overseas, known today as ESB International, documenting electrification projects in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

In 1987 the United Kingdom was hit by an unprecedented storm with over 5 million customers left without an electricity supply. The documentary ‘Task Force, ‘87’ documents the work of 300 ESB personnel, who travelled to the UK to assist in the restoration of power following severe storm damage. It features a number of interviews with ESB and English utilities personnel, regarding the role of ESB crews in the restoration, reaction of locals and differences in infrastructure and problems encountered.

Innovation is at the heart and soul of ESB and this is evidenced in the 1984 film ‘Tomorrow’s Houses Today’. A research project based on the construction of six houses in Kilcock, Co. Kildare,

the film depicts the planning and construction of the houses, each fitted with various different electrical and insulation systems including solar systems. The results were monitored and analysed by ESB to ensure that the most efficient building and insulation techniques could be planned for future use.

The 1992 documentary 'The Female Electrician' highlights career opportunities for female engineers and electricians in ESB and features footage and interviews with women regarding their roles within ESB.



Television commercials now included in the film archive feature some familiar faces and voices including the golden tones of DJ Larry Gogan. The 1986 television commercial, 'Baby' shows a father preparing for the middle of the night feed and received a number of awards including: first prize for the most Outstanding Television Advertising Campaign at the 34th International Advertising Film Festival in Cannes, 1987; Best Television Commercial and Best Overall Advertisement at the WPA Awards, (Women's Political Association) 1988 and Film and TV Festival Awards, New York, 1987. The brief behind the commercial was to show how electricity and electrical appliances enhance the quality of life, while having a strong emotional appeal.

Meanwhile, the classic 1988 commercial 'Going Back' featured broadcaster Alan Hughes travelling back home, while his mother was busy preparing the house highlighting electricity at work. While not produced for the Christmas market, the commercial has become synonymous with the festive season.

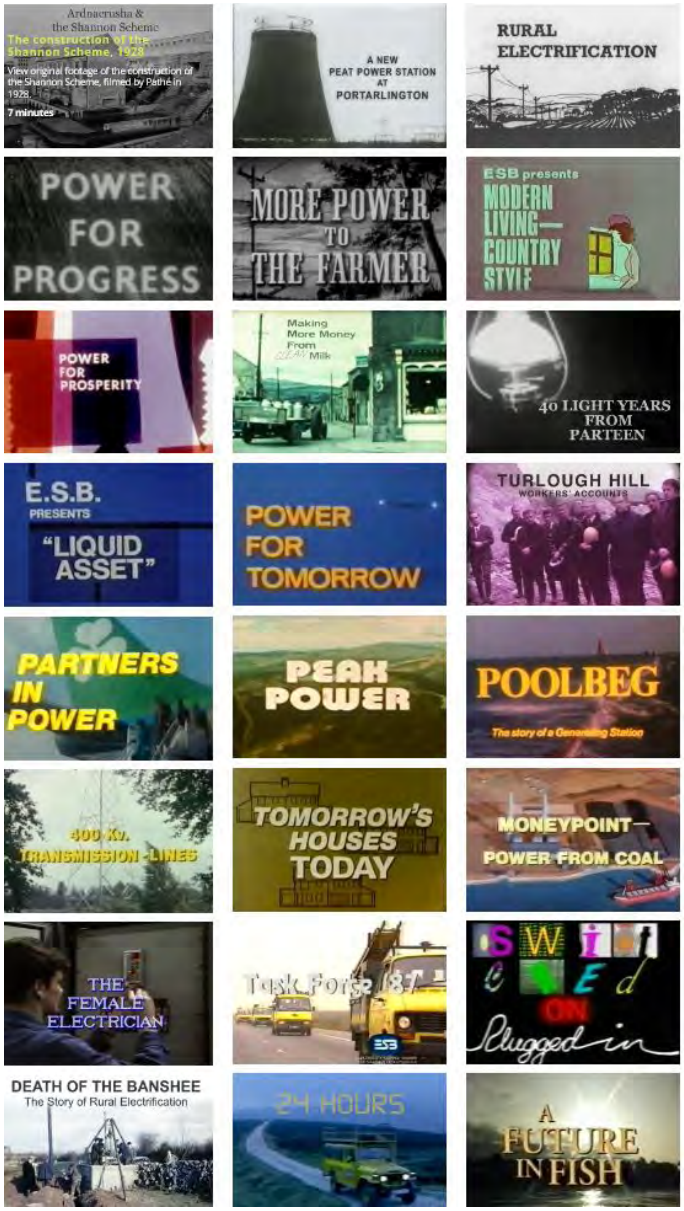


Lip syncing was well in vogue with the 1990 commercial 'Nightsaver' advertising lower night-time rates of electricity and featuring the Irish actress Orla Brady.

As a first step, we invited the IFI Irish Film Archive to make an item-level assessment of the original film reels held in ESB Archives and to provide a report on their preservation needs. This collaboration is part of a long term strategy to develop a sustainable plan for the preservation, digitisation and cataloguing of our complete film archive.

The launch of the film archive has been another successful team effort. Digital access copies of the films were converted in-house to mpegs from cds

and mini discs, researched and catalogued by the archives team. By researching the content of the films through this medium and making them available online, we are best placed to prioritise the future digital preservation requirements of this unique collection and continue to showcase the collection to our stakeholders.



View of the film archive on www.esbarchives.ie

By unlocking the evidential value in our film archive and making it accessible to the communities who have helped build ESB over our 90 year history, we continue to embrace the valuable and critical role that ESB and our archives continue to play throughout Irish society. The film archive also acts as a positive employee engagement tool and has been warmly received by all of our stakeholders, instilling a renewed and innovative sense of pride and purpose throughout ESB.

To view the complete film archive please visit www.esbarchives.ie/film