Archives & Records Association
Cumann Cartlann agus Taifead
Ireland/Éire

CUARDAIGH DO CHARTLANN
EXPLORE YOUR ARCHIVE

Inside this issue

Page 2: Explore Your Archive 2023

Page 5: History of Explore Your Archive

Page 7: Irish Heritage Studies Journal: Call for papers

Page 8: Happy Birthday to our Archivists: 50 Years of Archival Education in UCD

EXPLORE YOUR ARCHIVE 2023
25TH NOVEMBER – 3RD DECEMBER

NIAMH NÍ CHARRA
COMMUNICATIONS AND CAMPAIGNS OFFICER

The clocks have gone back, we're three storm names into the winter season, and if you're in to all things Celtic, then you may have just celebrated the Celtic New Year on the 1st of November. This can only mean one thing – it's time also to start planning for the annual Explore Your Archive campaign which kicks off with a focus week from 25th November to 3rd December! Time also to mark your diaries for the ARA Ireland launch of the focus week, which this year takes place at the Irish Traditional Music Archive, on Thursday 23rd of November (more details to follow).

For those not familiar with ARA's Explore Your Archive annual campaign , it aims to showcase the best of archives and archive services across Ireland and the UK and to make the public aware of the phenomenal array of archival collections held by organisations, both public and private, whatever their size and scale, and wherever their location. The Explore Your Archive in its current iteration has been running since 2014, with an earlier archives awareness campaign running for at least a decade prior to this (for more on this see the follow-on article!).

More recent updates have shifted the emphasis from a week-long campaign in November/December to a year-long campaign with a special Explore Your Archive day on the 10th of every month and a designated focus-week in November/December. We still can't count though so the focus week takes in nine days altogether.



Photo: EYA 2023 ambassador, Clodagh Finn. Photo © Ruth Medjber]

Our Ambassador

We are thrilled to announce that ARA Ireland's Explore Your Archive ambassador for 2023/2024 is journalist, author and Kerry native Clodagh Finn. Clodagh is author of 'Through Her Eyes: a history of Ireland in 21 women' and 'A Time to Risk All' (Gill Books), a biography of Mary Elmes, the 'Irish Oskar Schindler'. Last year, she collaborated with the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alison Gilliland, to write 'Her Keys to the City', which highlights the overlooked contributions of 80 women. She writes 'An Irishwoman's Diary' in the Irish Examiner and has worked as a sub-editor and feature writer for several newspapers. She has also worked as a freelance writer and editor in Paris. She has a degree in French and Archaeology from UCD and is particularly interested in writing about overlooked women from history.

How to take part

As in previous years, there are many ways to participate.

1) Events – whether in-person, online or a hybrid of both, options may include online talks, presentations, or exhibitions. These can be shared on our EYA events page, where previous submissions can be seen here.

2) Featured Archives – specific projects which have already taken place or which are ongoing can be promoted through our "Featured Archives" page on our website. You may find those submitted previously to be of use, and these can be seen here.

3) Social media – a strong social media campaign can be highly effective in promoting our sector and its work. As in previous years, Explore Your Archive have introduced daily hashtags. We would love you to share your work, collections and experiences online to give your followers a sense of the work that goes on behind the scenes and the fabulous archives that you care for. You can use these themes to inspire your tweets, but don't forget to tag us at @araireland and to use the #ExploreYourArchive hashtag each day. (You can also tag us and/or use #ExploreYourArchive on any archives related tweet throughout the year.)

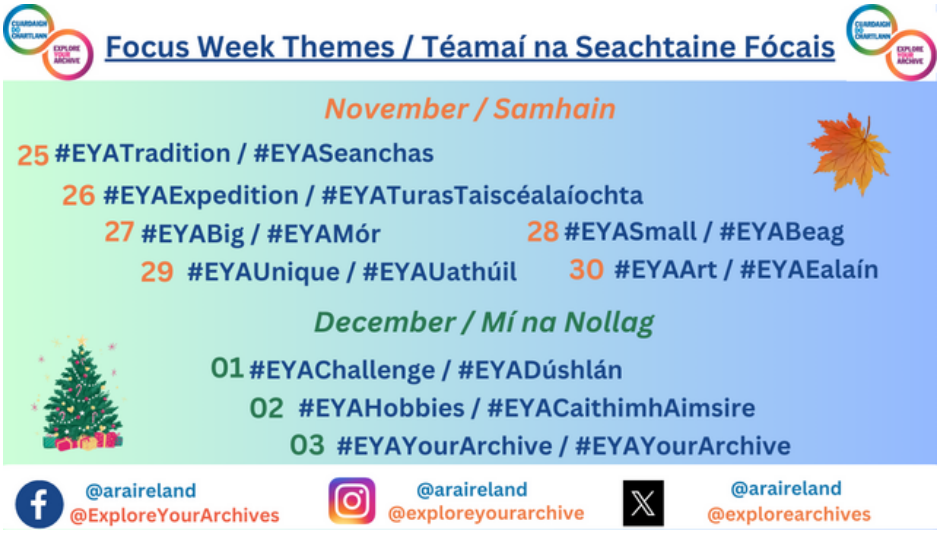


Photo: EYA 2023 Daily Hashtags.

The Launch

We are delighted to announce that our launch will take place at the Irish Traditional Music Archive, 75 Merrion Square, 6-8pm tbc. We are also delighted that Clodagh, our EYA 2023/2024 ambassador, will be joining us for our official EYA launch. More details to follow.

Please note that this building is an old Georgian building that currently has no lift. There will be a single(return) flight of stairs up to the ITMA reading room where the launch will take place.

If you have any questions about the Explore Your Archive campaign, or wish to submit events or material for the featured archive please do not hesitate to contact me on niamhnicharra@gmail.com

Please note that for your events to make the press release, details need to be received by Friday 10th of November.

Have fun planning!
Niamh

History of Explore Your Archive (Over to you!)

Niamh Ní Charra
Communications and Campaigns Officer

The upcoming Explore Your Archive focus week which kicks off the year-long campaign will be my 4th and final as Campaigns Officer. It got me thinking ahead to the handover period when a new volunteer will hopefully come on board to take the reins. With that in mind, I started the task a few weeks ago of contacting some former ARA Ireland campaign / publicity officers in order to map out the growth of the annual archives awareness campaign and to get a fuller picture of the involvement through the years of volunteer officers, host archives, and willing ambassadors.

This was largely due to the fact that, quite ironically, ARA itself does not have an archive, and over the years material relating to various regions' events had no place to be collectively stored. Personally I'm blaming this for thinking last year was the EYA's 10th anniversary (it was it's 9th). In ARA Ireland's case at least 10 different officers have volunteered over the course of this campaign, and its predecessor. The challenge then was to see how much could be remembered and what needed to be filled in! Those of you curious, and those of you who may have attended any or all of the annual launches, please read on to see how you may help (and how much you may have forgotten)!

To quote the ARA Ireland publicity officer for the first iteration - take a bow Eibhlin Colgan - what was known as the ARAI Archive Awareness campaign started sometime around 2002/2003 with zero budget, and was more about distributing ARA posters, leaflets etc. (the pre-digital era!) to participating archives who co-branded any planned activities with the AA logo. In year 2 or 3, funding was applied for to RTÉ to create a radio ad funded by their 'Supporting the Arts' initiative which was the first major publicity drive for the campaign. From 2006 until 2013 the Archives awareness campaign continued, with the addition of ambassadors. In 2014 it was rebranded and became known as the Explore Your Archive campaign. A small increase in budget allowed for a photo shoot each year to help promote the campaign.

The following chart is the result of this fun albeit brief investigation. Massive thanks to Eibhlin, Fergus and Felix for all their help, piecing it together. It is now over to you! We would love to hear from you. Can you fill in any other gaps? Have we missed anyone? Do you have photographs from any of these launches you'd like to share? If so, feel free to email me! And can you confirm when this started? Is this our 21st birthday?!!! It is certainly the 10th of the EYA in its current iteration, despite what you may have read from these pages last year! Either way, it's all about participation, so make sure you join us on the 23rd, and for the focus week from 25th November to 3rd December.

ARA Ireland EYA Ambassadors and Venues

Year	Ambassador	Photoshoot Venue	Launch Venue	Officer
2003-2005	N/A	N/A	N/A	Eibhlin Colgan
2006	Diarmuid Ferriter	N/A	NLI	Eve O'Callaghan
2007	Dr John McCafferty	N/A	National Archives	Fiona Kearney
2008	Fintan O'Toole	N/A	National Archives	Fiona Kearney
2009	Vincent Browne	N/A	Guinness Archive	Deirdre McParland
2010	Anne Enright	N/A	National Archives	Deirdre McParland
2011	Prof Roy Foster	N/A	National Photographic Archive	Harriett Wheelock
2012	Gerald Nash TD	N/A	Newman House	Ross Higgins
2013	David McCullough	N/A	Mansion House	Ross Higgins
**********	*Known as EYA from this point onwards*	**********		
2014	Ryan Tubridy	RTÉ Archives	Royal Society of Antiquaries	Fergus Brady
2015	David Norris	DCLA	Freemason's Hall,	Fergus Brady
2016	Catherine Murphy TD	NLI	Dublin City Hall ("crypt")	Felix Meehan
2017	John Bowman	Marsh's Library	Iveagh House	Felix Meehan
2018	Anne Cassin	TCD	NLI	Joanne Carroll
2019	Fin Dwyer	Register of Deeds	IAA	Joanne Carroll
2020	Emma Dabiri	-	online (Covid)	Niamh Ní Charra
2021	Flor McCarthy	Marsh's Library	"	Niamh Ní Charra
2022	Liz Gillis	RCPI	Conradh na Gaeilge	Niamh Ní Charra
2023	Clodagh Finn	RIA	ITMA	Niamh Ní Charra

ARA Ireland ambassadors, venues and officers 2002-2023

Irish Heritage Studies: The annual research journal of the Office of Public Works

Caroline Pegum, Editorial Manager - Irish Heritage Studies.

The Office of Public Works is delighted to announce the launch of a new annual research journal, 'Irish Heritage Studies', and invites submissions for the first volume. Published in association with Gandon Editions, the journal will showcase original critical research rooted in the substantial portfolio of material culture in the care of, and managed by, the OPW: built heritage; historical, artistic, literary and scientific collections; the national and international histories linked to these places and objects; and its own long organisational history. Journal articles will contribute to a deeper understanding of this remarkable collection of national heritage, and investigate new perspectives on aspects of its history. Submissions in abstract form are now invited from academics, post-graduate students, allied professionals, independent researchers and OPW personnel. The journal welcomes submissions from those at all stages of their research careers, including international researchers engaged with Irish or comparative studies, and the deadline for abstracts for the first volume is 15 December 2023.

Link to OPW press release >>

Link to journal hompage >>



Photo: Vicereines of Ireland. Portraits of Forgotten Women' exhibition at Dublin Castle, 2021, curated by Dr Myles Campbell. Photo by Kenneth O'Halloran, courtesy of Office of Public Works, Dublin Castle.

Happy Birthday to our Archivists!
50 Years of Archival Education in UCD

Dr Elizabeth Mullins, Head of Subject Archivistics, Director MA Archives and Records Management, School of History.

The School of History marked a significant milestone this year celebrating 50 years since the first archivists were trained in the university. Public awareness of the value of archivists has increased in Ireland over the last two decades, due to the significance of records in Commissions of Inquiry and the Decade of Centenaries but establishing the first training programme took place in a very different context. At this time, individuals had to travel abroad for full professional education and archives were collected mainly by the national repositories on the island and by special collection departments in universities.



Photo: Donal Dunne, Ailsa Holland and Robert Dudley Edwards, UCD Archives Department 1970s.

The move to establish archival training was spearheaded by Professor Robert Dudley Edwards, then professor of Modern Irish History in UCD, and by Ailsa Holland, a recent graduate of UCD's library training programme, whose archival credentials were strengthened by time spent working in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, West Germany.

The dynamism and determination of these two individuals, bolstered by significant support from a broad range of academics and librarians, led to the first Diploma in Archival Studies being delivered in the university in 1972-73. Since this time, archival training in UCD has gone from strength to strength and the university now delivers programmes at Certificate, Masters, and Doctoral level. The benchmark qualification to work as an archivist, initially a diploma and then a master's level degree, has been consistently accredited by the Archives and Records Association UK and Ireland, the relevant professional body, since this system was first introduced in the 1980s.

The School of History marked the birthday milestone in two ways. Firstly, to create a record of their professional lives, graduates were invited to contribute to a video of UCD archivists. This video (accessible here) includes images of archivists from the very first training course to the current day. It demonstrates the remarkable contribution UCD graduates have made to archives across the island of Ireland and abroad. The international contribution of UCD archivists is clear with contributions from the UK and Europe, New Zealand, North America, and Africa. In terms of Ireland, many of the graduates who submitted photos established the first archive or records management service in the island's local authorities, government departments, cultural institutions, corporate bodies, and religious organizations; others have worked to develop repositories dedicated to the preservation of film, music, architectural and military history. The video reflects the transformation of Ireland's archival landscape over the past half century and the remarkable role of UCD alumni in this process.

The video was first shown as part of a hybrid seminar held in Belfield in June 2023. This seminar, which was the second part of the birthday celebrations, was open to all former graduates, staff, and friends of the archival education programmes.



Photo: Image of the Anniversary Seminar June 2023

It featured a range of speakers including those involved in teaching, such as Ailsa Holland, who had founded the programmes, and graduates from different eras: Virginia Teehan, CEO of the Heritage Council (Class of 1983-84), John McDonough, former Director of the National Archives of Ireland and now University Librarian at DCU (Class of 1998-1999), and Ross Higgins, Director of Information Services and Records at the Adoption Authority of Ireland (Class of 2011-2012).

The seminar allowed for the story of how archival education and research developed and the experiences of graduates to be told. It highlighted changes in the professional and employment landscape over the 50 years since training was established. Speakers also stressed the need for continued advocacy in relation to local records, legislation, and the contribution of the profession to the management and preservation of digital heritage.

Those who attended the evening came away with the sense of what had been achieved and the need for continued activism. In addition, and perhaps most strikingly, the birthday celebrations demonstrated the strength of the community of record keepers that has been formed over the past half century in UCD and the commitment shared both by archival educators and practitioners to ensuring the preservation and access for all to the evidence and memory of the past and present, both national and global, into the future.