

Archives In Profile: RCSI Heritage Collections



Robert McDonnell
RCSI/IP/McDonnell



Emily Winifred Dickson
RCSI/IP/Dickson/3/1/3

The RCSI Library recently announced it has unveiled the College's prized Heritage Collections. These extensive collections comprise archives, manuscripts and antiquarian books relating to the teaching and practice of surgery and medicine in Ireland. Through a major cataloguing initiative, creation of a heritage blog and the launch of its first ever searchable catalogue the RCSI Heritage Collections have thrown open the doors to a wealth of an untapped history of medicine resource.

The archives include records created by RCSI in the running of the College since 1784 and its schools including the minutes of meetings and correspondence of the College, Council and various committees, registers of students, examinations, fees, fellows and licentiates.

The archive also houses the papers of a number of prominent individuals. This material is in a variety of formats including casebooks, diaries, lecture notes, published papers, photographs, clinical illustrations etc. These include:

- Abraham Colles 1773-1843
(RCSI/IP/Colles) of the Colles Fracture
- Sir Charles A. Cameron 1830-1921
(RCSI/IP/Cameron) a man who embarked on a crusade to improve sanitary condition in the tenements in Dublin
- John and Robert McDonnell, father and son, 1796-1892; 1828-1889
(RCSI/IP/McDonnell) John was to carry out the first amputation using ether as an inhalation anaesthetic and Robert the first blood transfusion in Ireland in 1847 and 1865 respectively

And some forgotten pioneers

- William Wallace 1791-1837
(RCSI/IP/Wallace) a controversial figure who used inoculation to treat skin and venereal diseases
- Emily Winifred Dickson 1866 – 1944
(RCSI/IP/Dickson) who became the first female Fellow of the College in 1893

Antiquarian books in surgery, medicine and allied topics are also part of the RCSI Heritage Collections. Works by Irish surgeons and doctors, especially those associated with RCSI over its 230 year history are a rich source of information which add to the history of RCSI and the study of the history of medicine. There are more than 6000 pamphlets, with a particular focus on local eighteenth and nineteenth century issues. The collection also includes commemorative and memorial literature relating to various members of the medical profession.

The RCSI Heritage Collections includes the largest medical instrument collection in Ireland, with more than 1500 instruments.



Robert McDonnell's blood transfusion apparatus
RCSI/MI/224

There is a fine set of thirty-eight wax anatomical models presented to the College by the Duke of Northumberland while Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1829. There is also a wide and varied estates collection that comprises of antique furniture, Presidential portraits, the silver Ceremonial Mace and a Bossi Brothers fireplace in the Colles Rooms.

The RCSI holds a unique place in the history of surgery and medical education in Ireland since the late 1700s. The pioneers, founders and inventors of new surgical techniques and instruments walked through the doors of the RCSI. Be they students or staff they helped forge medical advancements that benefit patients daily.

The RCSI Heritage Collections are now available to search online and updates about the collections can be found on our website and blog. Additionally anybody interested in consulting the collection can visit the Widdess Reading Room in the Mercer Library. Access is by prior appointment only by sending an email to: archivist@rcsi.ie

Meabh Murphy, RCSI
<http://www.rcsi.ie/heritagecollections>

.....
The Professor Who Tamed Lions!
Dr Dickie Hunter's Continental Circus



Dr Richard (Dickie) Hunter was born in British Guiana in 1884. His mother brought him to Portglenone, Co Antrim, her home town, after the death of his father. Educated in Ballymena, Co Antrim, he later served an apprenticeship in the local drapery trade.

At the age of 30, he became a salesman in the same trade in Belfast. World events were to change Richard Hunter's life. Following the outbreak of the First World War, he became a hospital orderly with the French Red Cross. After only one year he was injured and transported home however, by then, he had acquired a strong interest in medicine and working among the sick. When he regained his health, Queen's University, Belfast granted his application for a scholarship in the faculty of Medicine.

As a student, Dickie Hunter was always the life and soul of every social event. He organised the famous 'Queen's Jesters' and they visited hospitals at Christmas entertaining the patients. He graduated in medicine and became Dr Hunter. He joined the staff at Queen's University Belfast as a lecturer in Anatomy and Embryology and an examiner in Anatomy for the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He was very fond of his students and it was clear that they adored him as they often sang to him "Good morning dear teacher, good morning to you".

Besides his work in the University, Dr Hunter's interest in, and love for, animals was well-known and he was made curator of the Belfast Zoo in 1937. He caused delight and amazement by entering a cage with two fully-grown lionesses. He wished to demonstrate how the fiercest animals could be tamed without cruelty. In 1938,

he went to England and met with the Chipperfield Circus family and the opportunity arose to become a stand-in ringmaster. Dr Hunter was so good that Chipperfield asked him if he would consider becoming a full-time ringmaster for their famous circus. He declined the request but the die had been cast and Dickie decided that in order to fulfil his new interest, he would have to open a circus in Belfast.

On Christmas Day, 1940, he presented his first circus in the Belfast Hippodrome in partnership with G.L. Birch as proprietor. It was a huge success and the first of many he would bring to Belfast. More and more people got to know Dr Dickie Hunter, not as an academic but as a ringmaster, resplendent in his scarlet uniform and top hat. He moved with his 'Continental Circus' to the Empire Theatre and it became an integral part of Christmas in Belfast for many people. Dr Hunter discussing his love for the circus in his memoirs: "*I am still a boy at heart, and feel a thrill of excitement at the mere sight of the brightly coloured bills which announce the approaching visit of a circus*".

People young and old flocked to the circus in droves and were entertained by local and international artists and acts. In a programme from 1955, we have *Silvio and his Golden Harp*, *The Two Boris* –gymnast show from Russia, *Oriental Foot Jugglers – Abdulla and Siada*, *Miss Mary – Queen of Ballerinas*, *Five Valnohas*- the world's greatest cycling act from Leipzig, *Darly's Dogs* – the greatest dog act of all time from Copenhagen and no circus would be complete with *The Two Milanese* billed as Poland's craziest clowns!

In response to a growing popular concern about the use of animals in entertainment, animal-free circuses are becoming more common around the world. In 2009, Bolivia passed legislation banning the use of any animals in a circus. Greece became the first European country to ban any animal from performing in any circus in its territory in February 2012. The Dr Hunter circus archive is well and truly from another era, but no one can deny the glamour, smiles and colour that it brought to Belfast during the austere days of the 1940s' and 50s'.

The Dr Richard Hunter Circus Papers are held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland with the reference number D4577. They contains photographs, programmes, articles and the incomplete memoirs of Dr Richard Hunter and his life in the circus from 1940-1965. The archive is currently being catalogued and will be open in due course. Image used with permission of the Deputy Keeper of Records, PRONI.

Brett Irwin, PRONI

Pearse Hutchinson Collection at Maynooth University



Peter Hutchinson (1927-2012)

In late 2013 agreement was reached with the estate of the renowned writer Pearse Hutchinson to permanently deposit his archive in the Library at NUI Maynooth (now Maynooth University). While this will lead to a variety of provisions, such as an annual bursary and colloquia, at the centre of the whole project is the archival collection, in breadth and content, every bit as extraordinary as the man.

Born in Glasgow, Hutchinson was raised in Dublin by Irish parents who were active supporters of Sinn Féin. His father, a printer, was interned in Frongoch from 1919 to 1921, while his mother counted Countess Markievicz as a friend and correspondent. Hutchinson studied Spanish and Italian and travelled extensively, living in Spain for almost a decade, where he developed a deep love of the Catalan and Galician language, culture and literature. His career was varied, encompassing poetry (in a variety of languages), translations, as well as frequent contributions to radio and print media; he wrote a regular Irish language column for the RTÉ Guide and hosted a weekly RTÉ Radio 1 programme of Irish poetry, music and folklore, *Óró Domhnaigh*. Beyond this, he founded the literary journal *Cyphers*, Ireland's longest-running poetry magazine. He received the Butler Award for Irish writing in 1969. In the early 1970s he took up the Gregory fellowship in poetry at the University of Leeds.

Despite such an eclectic career, it is Hutchinson's poems which earned him his literary reputation, with a 50-year publication catalogue incorporating works such as *Tongue Without Hands* (1963) and *Faoistín Bhacach* (1968) through, *The Soul that Kissed the Body* (1991) and *Barnsley Main Seam* (1995). His *Collected Poems* was published on his 75th birthday in 2002. A truly international poet, Hutchinson's subjects are often shown through the prism of other countries – most usually Spain and its varied regions.

An archive of this size and diversity brings with it both challenges and obligations and acquiring it

was not a decision taken lightly. Establishing a rationale for acquisition invariably helps ensure that the collection will be both appropriately curated, but also well used.

The Library has been proactively building up its research collections for some time and one of the key themes which we focus on is the idea of 'the outsider' – the person or persons who challenge convention. As a theme it transcends discipline and as such it offers guidance, rationale and structure without being unnecessarily limiting. Hutchinson, who long swam against the tide both personally and professionally, fits within this rubric, sitting alongside others such as Teresa Deevy, Ken Saro-Wiwa and Eneas McDonnell whose collections are also in the Library.

One of the central roles of an academic library and archive is to support research, teaching and learning and in the Hutchinson Archive, NUI Maynooth acquired a collection that will reward research, not just from the literary angle, but from historians, sociologists and more. The archive, which Declan Kiberd has called '*an alternative cultural history of Ireland*' is incredibly dense and diverse, allowing a researcher chart the development of a poet's craft, but also showing aspects of life in Dublin and beyond in mid-20th century Ireland.

While we do not espouse the role of a public 'heritage' institution, such as the National Library or Archives, we are conscious of our role in preserving and providing access to such treasures beyond the library's walls. As such, when considering our collection development, we do take time to consider impact beyond the walls of the University. With online access, digitisation and open access initiatives, considerations such as this only become more important.

The archive reflects both Hutchinson's career and literary output, and his personal and family life in an assortment of documents. The collection is currently being arranged along these categories. It includes the Hutchinson family papers, concerning his parents, Henry Warren Hutchinson and Caitlín McElhinney. Both were actively involved with Sinn Féin and the republican cause in Glasgow in the early 20th century, and their papers consist of letters, photographs and printed material. The family papers also include documents relating to Hutchinson's childhood, including notebooks and drawings and a large collection of photographs. Documents of interest include letters from Eamon De Valera, Sinéad De Valera, Countess Markievicz and Margaret Pearse. Also from this period are letters from Henry to Caitlín during his internment in Mountjoy prison in 1923.

Hutchinson literary papers make up the core of the collection. These papers include drafts of both published and unpublished poems, scripts for Hutchinson's radio show, reviews, correspondence and Tagairt, Hutchinson's weekly column in the RTÉ guide, which ran for 27 years from 1976 to 2003. In addition, the collection also contains a large assortment of ephemera relating to arts and cultural events in Ireland and Spain including posters, flyers, programmes and booklets.

Among Hutchinson's own papers items of note include correspondence from international writers including Saul Bellow (American), Octavio Paz (Mexican), Salvador Espriu (Catalan), Josep Carner (Catalan) and Toni Turull (Catalan). He also corresponded with his contemporaries in Ireland and the UK, and the collection includes letters from Séan Ó Ríordáin, Caitlín Maude, Brendan Behan, Mairtín Ó Direáin, Gabriel Rosenstock, Máire Mhac an tSaoi, Paul Durcan, John Jordan, Michael Hartnett, Seamus Heaney and P.J. Kavanagh.

In addition to a large collection of unpublished poems the collection also contains early drafts of some of Hutchinson's well known published works including *Tongue without Hands* (1963), *Expansions* (1969) and *Watching the Morning Grow* (1972). The collection also contains the original script for Hutchinson's weekly radio show *Óró Domhnaigh*, which ran from 1977 to 1978 on RTÉ, together with some of his original research for the broadcast. As all but one of the original broadcasts are now lost, these scripts are a unique record of the eclectic show about Irish arts and culture, which was extensively researched and written by Hutchinson.

The collection is being made available on a phased basis from Spring 2015 and for additional information please contact: Special Collections, John Paul II Library, Maynooth University. Tel: 01 4747423 Email: library.specialcollections@nuim.ie

Ciara Joyce ,Archivist
John Paul II Library, Maynooth University

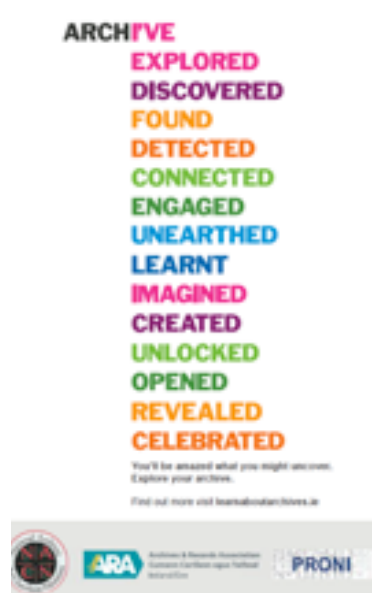
.....
**Archivists urged to support
Irish Archives Resource's future growth**

Ireland's only archive web portal, www.iar.ie provides access to hundreds of unique archival collections. The portal facilitates users to view a rich and diverse range of archival collections in a single website. In recent months, the portal has experienced a doubling in size with contributors from over 30 prominent archival repositories. The Irish Archive Resources Steering group is calling on archivists to join the portal by providing descriptions of their key collections to support its continued growth.

Hazel Menton, Chair of the Irish Archive Resources said, "Popular TV series such as *Who do you think you are?*, and the Decade of Centenaries celebrations have put the spotlight on archives. The portal is an ideal resource for members of the archival community to respond to public interest in archives and to publicise their holdings. Initial support and guidance is available to ensure collections meet national and international description standards, and we regularly hold training days for potential content providers. Eventually, it is hoped that the collections from the IAR portal will feed into similar major European wide archival web initiatives such as Europeana and Apex."

An information flyer is available to download at http://www.iar.ie/PDFs/IAR_Flyer.pdf and copies are also available in public libraries. Archivists and other professionals interested in contributing collections to the IAR portal may contact the IAR Steering Group at info@iar.ie

.....
Explore Your Archive Campaign 2015



The annual Archives and Records Association (ARA) public awareness campaign, 'Explore Your Archives' (EYA) is now in its third year and will run from Saturday 14 November until Sunday 22 November. The ARA Ireland campaign will be launched by Senator David Norris on the evening of Thursday 12 November 2015 at 6:00 pm.

The event will take place in the Freemasons' Hall, 17 Molesworth Street, Dublin 2. The campaign in the Irish region is supported by the National Archives of Ireland (NAI) and Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and the Archives and Records Association, Ireland (ARAI). Archive services throughout Ireland are encouraged to host events, talks, and exhibitions during this week to tie in with the campaign and to actively engaged with social media. Details of all events will be published on the www.learnaboutarchives.ie website, and promoted through social media and press releases. Any questions about the Explore Your Archives campaign can be directed to: Fergus Brady, Outreach Officer, ARA, Email: bradyfa@gmail.com

Consents to Alterations in Churches: RCB Library Project

A long running project in the RCB Library to index the records of consents to alterations in churches has recently been completed. All 26 volumes of consent forms, covering the years 1876 to 2012, have been indexed and the index can be viewed at www.ireland.anglican.org/about/11

Prior to the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland by the Irish Church Act of 1869, the fabric of the church, its ornaments, furniture and fittings were under the jurisdiction of the bishop and could only be altered by obtaining a faculty from the bishop's court. Most of the records of the ecclesiastical courts were destroyed in the fire in the Public Record Office in 1922 and so there is little surviving documentation about pre-disestablishment church alterations. However, for the post-disestablishment period the Representative Church Body's records of the consents to alterations, which replaced the pre-disestablishment faculty system, provide a substantial and sustained record of church alterations.

The 40th Canon of the Church of Ireland (Chapter iv of the 1871 Statutes), which dealt with the ornaments of the church, required that no change would be made to the structure, ornaments or monuments of a church without the consent of the incumbent and select vestry, and the bishop or Ordinary. In pursuit of this the Representative Church Body, in 1876, provided advice on how potential applicants should proceed. A copy of the Canon and the advice circular were incorporated into a 'Form of Certificates of Consent to Alterations' which when signed by incumbent, the secretary of the select vestry, the architect and the bishop was sent to the RCB for approval.

These forms provide valuable information on alterations to church structures some of which may not otherwise be recorded. It seems reasonable to assume that large scale works such as those in Ballyclug in Co. Antrim, in 1883, which involved the reseating of the church, the re-location of the vestry and the addition of a chancel would be recorded in the vestry minutes or reported in the local press but smaller works like putting 'ventilations' in the end walls of Glengarriffe church or changing the location of the bell in Lusk, Co. Dublin, may have gone unnoticed.

There is much in the consents about alterations to church furnishings – a new oak pulpit 'to cost about £50' was installed in Stillorgan church, Co. Dublin, in 1880, a pitch pine lectern was to be erected in St Jude's church, Ballynafeigh, Belfast, in 1881, while in Kilpipe, Co. Wexford, in 1883, the old pews were replaced with open seats and a new pulpit, desk and communion rail were provided. Such re-ordering of churches might

simply reflect a desire to modernize but might also suggest an open-ness to new patterns of worship or suggest a particular style of churchmanship.

Many consents deal with the erection of memorials and while a proposal, like that for Macully church, Co. Kilkenny, for a 'Memorial Tablet in Church' does not provide much information, those proposals which named individuals and families may be valuable for genealogical purposes. For example, in Castehaven church, Co. Cork, there was to be a brass memorial to Mrs Emmeline Eyerton Bushe while in Kilseily church, Co. Clare, Mrs Phelps sought permission to erect a tablet in memory of her husband, John Leckey Phelps. Such information is especially valuable in instances where the church has been demolished and the memorials have not been recorded – not everywhere was like Moyliscar, in Co. Meath, where memorials to Colonel and Captain Danefield were taken from the old church and erected in the new church. Often, too, memorials took the form of stained glass windows and the consents can provide useful evidence for dating the installation of windows.

The consents are likely to be of interest to local and parish historians, architects and genealogists. In themselves they are a useful source of miscellaneous pieces of information about churches and their contents but used in conjunction with parish records and especially with the on-going on-line catalogue of the architectural drawings of churches in the RCB Library [www.archdrawing.ireland.anglican.org] they have the potential to add considerably to our knowledge of the built heritage of the Church of Ireland.

Dr. Ray Refaüssé, RBC Librarian and Archivist

Lady Londonderry and the Great War :PRONI



Image D1982 reproduced with kind permission of the Deputy Keeper of Records, PRONI

Lady Londonderry- The leading light of London society- was a glittering socialite who was a symbol of wealth and power. She played a leading role in Irish and British social and political

life from her estate at Mount Stewart in Co Down and Londonderry House, Park Lane in London. She inspired awe and affection in equal measure and many found her energy and enthusiasm hard to resist.....but she was so much more than a *Grand Dame*. She was devoted to helping other women in the search for equality and sometimes, against very personal criticism, she strove to gain women the vote and challenged views commonly held at that time regarding women and their role in society.

Edith Londonderry also inspired great loyalty and confidence in her many military friends who served in the frontline (and behind it) in the Western Front. She received insights into the conditions and effects of the war that few outside the high military command could possibly know. Such was her charisma and position that a lot of correspondence bypassed military censors and she knew what conditions on the Western Front were actually like and not the 'great adventure' view held by the newspapers particularly in the early stages of the war.

In the early years of World War 1, a number of voluntary women's organisations had been formed to assist with the British war effort. This was made possible (but with some resistance from attitudes at the time) to free up men who had hitherto been employed on the land, to serve at the front and by the clamouring voices of the Suffragette movement.

Lady Londonderry set up a military cooking section that became the nucleus of the future Women's Auxiliary Army Corps of the British Army. This section produced as many as 40,000 trained cooks of whom many worked at army camps and military hospitals during the war. Other Women's Legion members would become motor and ambulance drivers, despatch riders and technicians from whom the Motor Transport Section was later formed as well as an agriculture unit. She also helped to establish medical aid centres, behind the lines of the Western Front with the assistance of Princess Helena and the YMCA.

Lady Edith Londonderry worked tirelessly at expanding the Legion's role, visiting depots, writing articles, speaking, interviewing and seizing every opportunity to show that, when given a chance, women could make a massive contribution to the war effort. In 1916, Lady Londonderry was approached by the War Office to form a corps of women drivers to release men for the front. They were recruited from the Women's Legion and drafted into the Royal Army Service Corps. Lady Londonderry reflecting on this after the war: *"It became obvious that there was room for some organisation of women on a large scale, not only for emergency work as and when required, but for all those other duties where women could take the place of men called to the colours"*

The success of the Women's Legion was a definite factor in influencing the government to organise female labour along official lines during the latter part of the war. Lady Londonderry's contribution was formally recognised by being awarded the Order of Knighthood of the British Empire in 1917. There can be little doubt that the contribution of the Women's Legion and of women to the war of 1914-1918 paved the way for the Representation of the People Act of 1918 when 8.4 million women gained the right to vote.

Another fascinating aspect of Lady Londonderry and the First World War is the often candid correspondence she received from influential figures she was friends with serving in the military. Such is the range and depth of her friendships that she was privy to information that surely was able to bypass strict military censorship.

Information regarding morale, tactics, losses and general conditions in the trenches were written and dispatched to her particularly from General W.P.Pulteney, the commander of III British Army Corps and Captain William Cavendish – Bentinck of the Royal Horse Guards.

Letters from General Pulteney regarding the German First Army retreat from the Marne river. The first battle of the Marne fought between 5-9 September, 1914, was a strategic victory for the Allied forces and halted one of the major objectives of the Schlieffen Plan to capture Paris. One of the famous events in the defence of Paris is the military governor of Paris sending 600 Parisian taxis carrying French reinforcements to the front. These became known as the Taxis of the Marne.

Letters from Captain William Cavendish-Bentinck of the Royal Horse Guards regarding Poison Gas being used on the Western Front for the first time. At 5pm on 22 April the German Army released chlorine gas over a 4 mile front of the line held by divisions of the French Army. The letter records the effect on the Allied lines and the near mutiny of the French troops in what would prove to be a dark day in the history of the First World War:

"The scene the first night of this affair in Poperinghe was awful, as all the French Territorial's and Zoaves who bolted from the gasses let off by the Germans, on their way to Poperinghe met their transport coming up and told them that all was lost and that the Germans had got hold of Ypres...We put a cordon of Infantry across the road with fixed bayonets, it was only with this persuasion that order was restored and the French troops persuaded to go back to their trenches" (D3099/3/8/2/5).

These documents and many thousands of others are found in the Londonderry Papers at PRONI. The papers are a major resource for family and local historians, academics, authors and film

makers. Please contact PRONI in advance if you wish to undertake extensive research using this collection so that we can ensure that all the necessary records are made available to you.

Brett Irwin, PRONI

.....
**Irish Archives Volume 21 on
Church of Ireland records**

The Minister for Education Jan O'Sullivan TD launched volume 21 of *Irish Archives* which is devoted to the records of the Church of Ireland on 4 November 2014, at St Patrick's Cathedral Deanery, Upper Kevin Street, with the kind permission of the Dean, Very Reverend Victor Stacey. Minister O'Sullivan is the first person to hold the Minister for Education portfolio who happens also to be a member of the Church of Ireland

In the summer of 2013, the First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama and her daughters were given an overview of the President's genealogy and viewed three Church of Ireland registers. That such genealogical research was possible – indeed that the initial visit in 2011 by President Obama to reclaim his maternal Irish roots happened at all – was underpinned by the survival and availability of Church of Ireland records; in the Obama's case, the parish registers for Templeharry in county Offaly.



Viewing the Templeharry parish registers, Mrs Michelle Obama and her daughters Sasha and Malia

Picture courtesy of <http://theobamadiary.com>

The Church of Ireland does not always get the credit it deserves for gathering such records together and keeping them safe. This volume of *Irish Archives* aims to set the record straight by paying tribute to those who have looked after an array of parish collections, diocesan papers and miscellaneous manuscripts in local and central custody and by providing a platform for the current generation of historians and archivists to reassess and reconstruct some of the complex aspects of Church of Ireland identity.

They include Susan Hemmens (Marsh's Library, Dublin), Dr Susan Hood (co-editor of *Irish Archives*), Dr Martin Maguire (Dundalk Institute of

Technology), Dr Miriam Moffitt (NUI Maynooth), Dr Michael O'Neill (architectural historian), Dr Robbie Roulston (UCD School of History and Archives), Dr Raymond Refaüssé (librarian and archivist at the RCB Library), and Andrew Whiteside (archivist, historian and ISA secretary).

Seven reviews of academic publications based on primary source material are additionally provided by Dr Marc Caball, Dr Mary Clark, Brian Donnelly, Ross Higgins, Aideen Ireland and Gregory O'Connor.

Irish Archives Volume 22 will focus on business archives in Ireland and will be launched in the Guinness Storehouse in November 2015. Invitations and full details will be circulated to members in advance.

**Dr Susan Hood and Elizabeth McEvoy,
co-editors, *Irish Archives***

.....
**Archivists Research Brings Stories of
Individuals' Involved in War to Life**

Archivists have been exploring hidden paper trails to build up personal pictures of individuals involved in World War One. They presented their findings, which aim to make the events of the First World War more accessible to people 100 years later, to a large crowd which filled the Lady Chapel of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin on Tuesday February 3.

Entitled 'Hidden Pages from World War One', the seminar was a joint venture between St Patrick's Cathedral and the Irish Society for Archives. The speakers from a number of projects and exhibitions revealed their explorations of previously unknown archive material of soldiers and civilians.

Proceedings were chaired by RTE news anchor, Bryan Dobson, who following a welcome by the cathedral's Dean, the Very Revd Victor Stacey and the chairman of the Irish Society for Archives, Dr Ray Refaüssé, explained that the event aimed to put a human face on the lives of those in the First World War.

"This will enable us in 2015 to have some context and understanding of those who went through this cataclysmic experience 100 years ago," he said, praising the archivists for their vital role in sharing the information they had uncovered.

The first speaker, Nicky Ralston, National Library of Ireland, Curator of the 'Ireland and WW1' exhibition, gave a talk entitled 'Meeting Michael O'Leary'. While this was not the Michael O'Leary of budget airline fame who is so well known today, the Michael O'Leary who fought in World War One became very well known and was much featured in the press at the time. She

focused on the way in which the National Library of Ireland uncovered the extraordinary story of Michael O'Leary's award of the Victoria Cross through the library's collection of newspapers and periodicals and used the narrative to put a personal face on the Cork man who became a symbol of Irish heroism.

Noelle Dowling, of the Catholic Diocesan Archives Dublin highlighted the extensive work archivists in the Archdiocese have done with the papers and diaries of Fr Francis Gleeson who was a chaplain at the front in World War One. In her paper 'From Templemore to the Rue de Bois: the Fr Francis Gleeson collection', she outlined Fr Gleeson's collection of diaries, brigade roll books and correspondence, which give an insight into life at the front, including letters he received from the families of soldiers and gritty accounts of the hardship of life at war.



Panel of speakers at St. Patrick's Cathedral

Andrew Whiteside, Archivist with Kilkenny College gave an account of his research into the life of 'Jack Salter of Skibbereen'. He explored the mystery of a past pupil reported to have been killed in action with the Royal Irish Rifles on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. However, within weeks of the official notification his parents received a chipper letter from their son, who was in a prisoner of war camp, requesting supplies and asking that his address be passed on to friends so that they could write to him.

Susan Hood of the Representative Church Body Library talked of 'Finding letters from the Western Front: a Church of Ireland parish story'. She focused on the 10 letters written to the Revd Arthur Barton, Rector of Dundela parish in East Belfast. The letters were found in a tea chest in the former Bishop's House in Kilmore where Barton

was Bishop from 1930 to 1939 before becoming Archbishop of Dublin. She highlighted her subsequent efforts to find out more about the men who wrote the letters which were digitized as part of the RCB Library's Archive of the Month series and the story was subsequently picked up on by BBC Northern Ireland. Eight of the 10 letter writers were traced with the help of local historians.

Andrew Smith, Education Officer of St Patrick's Cathedral detailed the background of the 'Lives Remembered at Saint Patrick's Cathedral'. He spoke of the overwhelming response the exhibition had elicited from the public with over 10,000 messages being written by visitors from around the world in remembrance of those affected by war. He said they were now examining how to archive these messages as a social commentary for the future.

Closing the seminar Bryan Dobson thanked the speakers for sharing their insights into the lives of people who were gone but not forgotten. The Irish Society for Archives will hold a similar seminar in February 2016 relating to the 1916 Rising. Invitations will be circulated to members and general public in advance.

Lynn Glanville, Church of Ireland Diocesan Communications Officer, Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough

.....
ISA MATTERS

ISA NEWSLETTER

Items for inclusion in the Spring Newsletter 2016 are welcome and must be received by 14 February 2016. Please send items to Ellen Murphy, ellen.murphy@dublincity.ie

ISA LECTURE SERIES 2015/2016

The first lecture of the series will take place on Tues 6 October in Dublin City Library and Archive, 138-144 Pearse Street, D2 at 18.30, with wine reception from 18.00. Mr Justice Peter Charleton (Chairman, National Archives Advisory Council) will speak on 'Permanent Government and the National Archives'

ISA MEMBERSHIP

To become a member or renew membership of the Irish Society for Archives, please contact: Ms Antoinette Doran, Hon. Membership Secretary, Irish Society for Archives, c/o Redemptorist Library, Marianella, 75 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6 or email isasubscription@gmail.com

ISA Committee Officers:

Dr Raymond Refausse, Chairperson; email raymond.refausse@rcbdub.org

Andrew Whiteside, Hon. Secretary; email: andwhiteside@gmail.com

Dr. Kerry Houston; Hon. Treasurer, kerry.houston@dit.ie

Ms. Antoinette Doran, Hon Membership secretary, isasubscription@gmail.com

Ms. Elizabeth McEvoy, Co-editor *Irish Archives*, emcevoy@nationalarchives.ie

Dr. Susan Hood, Co-editor *Irish Archives*, susan.hood@rcbdub.org

Ms. Ellen Murphy, Newsletter editor, ellenmurphy@dublincity.ie

Ms. Hanne Sheeran, Website editor, hsheeran@gmail.com