



National University of Ireland, Galway
Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh

Ollscéala

Nuachtlitir Foirne - Staff Newsletter

Deireadh Fómhair 2005

John McGahern opens Centre for Irish Studies



*John McGahern with
Dr Louis de Paor, Director of the
Centre for Irish Studies*

The Centre for Irish Studies at NUI Galway was officially opened by the distinguished writer and Adjunct Professor of Irish Studies, John McGahern at a special ceremony in September.

The author unveiled a portrait of Martha Fox, a Boston schoolteacher with a lifelong interest in Irish literature and history, after whom the Centre's building on Distillery Road is named. An endowment from the estate of Martha Fox has made possible the refurbishment of the building, where there is now space for up to 12 teaching and research personnel.

Work undertaken by the Centre for Irish Studies has a strong international dimension, attracting researchers from as far afield as China, Cuba, Canada, Japan, England, and America.

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Focal ón Eagarthóir

Fáilte chuig eagrán Dheireadh Fómhair de *Ollscéala*. Welcome to the October edition of *Ollscéala*.

The return of the students heralds the end of festivals in the city and conferences on campus.

As you will read in this edition, international conferences hosted by the University throughout the summer months were many and varied, spanning topics from Health Psychology to Islam and from Family Welfare to Bats. Feedback from delegates indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the University as an excellent conference venue and delegates were also fulsome in their praise of the dedication and commitment to excellence of the academic organisers.

In this edition, we also highlight key new appointments as well as reports of individual achievements of staff and students.

Thank you all for your submissions. Do continue to keep us informed of activities in your area.

Máire Mhic Uidhir,
Editor

Ollscéala is published by the Press and Information Office
Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh.
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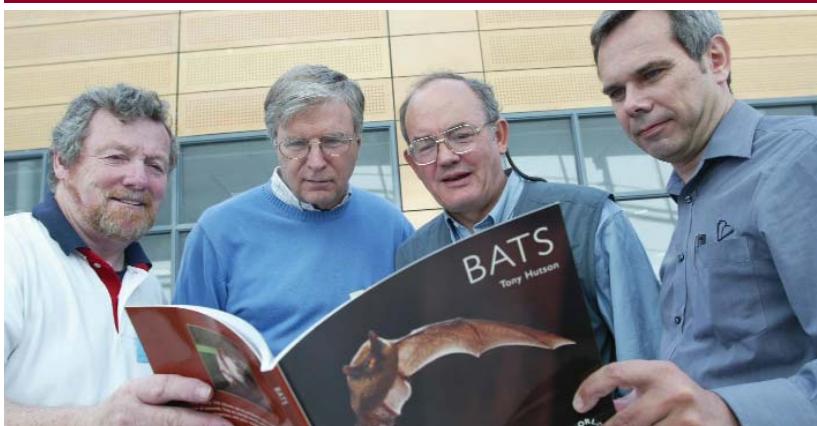
New director appointed to Galway University Foundation



Tom Joyce

Tom Joyce joined Galway University Foundation in September 2005 as Executive Director. Prior to his appointment, he served as Managing Director of Connacht Court from 1988 to 2003. He was a founding Director of MicronClean (Irl) Ltd and Micronclean International based in Holland and has carried out consultancy assignments in Europe, Asia and the US on behalf of Micronclean International. Tom, who is a Fellow of the Marketing Institute of Ireland, was Chairman of the National Breast Cancer Research Institute (NBCRI) at University College Hospital Galway from its inception in 1991 until August 2005. His focus as Executive Director of Galway University Foundation will be to continue to develop the Foundation's activities towards making a substantial contribution to University funding.

Scientists showcase diversity of bats



Pictured from left to right are; Dr James Dunne, Department of Zoology, NUI Galway and conference organiser; Professor Thomas Kunz, Boston University; Professor Paul Racey, University of Aberdeen; and Professor Gareth Jones, University of Bristol.

Over 200 scientists from 40 countries attended the 10th European Bat Research Symposium in August. NUI Galway's long involvement in bat research, first initiated by Professor James Fairley in the early 1980s, led to the University being chosen as the venue for the conference's first visit to Ireland. The event provided a fascinating insight into the diversity of bats, of which there are 10 species native to Ireland. Dr James Dunne of NUI Galway's Department of Zoology said bats were extremely effective in controlling Ireland's insect population and he put paid to some of the more popular misconceptions about the common bat.

"Despite several myths, bats are not blind, they do not entangle themselves in people's hair and the species native to Ireland do not spread disease," he said. Other areas explored during the week-long conference included research which shed light on the eating habits of bats, along with a study of a maternity roost in County Clare, which is being used to determine the bats' feeding patterns. The conference included a special workshop which dealt with the problems associated with the destruction of many bat-inhabited old buildings and discussed the legal obligations under European law to protect bats and their habitats.

In sympathy

It was with deep sadness that we learned of the death of Dr Patrick A. Finan (Tony), Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry from 1963 - 1998 and former Dean of the Faculty of Science. We extend our deep sympathies to his family, friends and former colleagues. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

Conferrings mark official opening of Donegal campus



Bronnadh Céimeanna Oinigh ar Thomás Mac Giolla Bhríghde, ar Mháire Mhic Niallais agus ar Mhícheál Mac Giolla Easbuic.



Ag oscailt campas Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge i nGaoth Dobhair, bhí ó chlé, Éamon Mac Niallais, Riarthóir; an Dr Iognáid Ó Muirheartaigh, Uachtarán OÉ, Gaillimh; Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D., Aire Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta, a d'oscail an tIonad; agus Peadar Mac an Iomaire, Príomhfheidhmeannach, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge

History was made in September when the University's €5m Gaoth Dobhair campus, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge, was officially opened by the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D. The ceremony included the conferring of Diplomas on 75 students, who have completed academic programmes at the campus.

The University also conferred Honorary MA Degrees on three remarkable Donegal individuals, in recognition of

the exceptional contribution they have made to their communities. These were Tomás Mac Giolla Bhríghde, Mícheál Mac Giolla Easbuic and Máire Mhic Niallais.

Bhunaigh OÉ, Gaillimh ionad oideachais i nGaoth Dobhair trí bliana ó shin ar iarratas ó Choiste na Crannóige agus Comharchumann Forbartha Gaoth Dobhair. Thug Údarás na Gaeltachta spás don Ollscoil i bPáirc Ghnó Gaoth Dobhair.

A range of third level full-time and part-time programmes, through the medium of Irish, is provided at the Gaoth Dobhair campus, including Diplomas in Television Skills, Applied Computing, a Child Care and a Language Acquisition programme. In the past year, 150 students completed courses at the centre. The University also intends providing degree programmes in Gaoth Dobhair in the near future.

Lady Gregory Fellowships awarded



Pictured with Professor John Marshall are, from left, Fellowship winners, Miriam Clyne, Jacopo Bisagni, and Stacey Furlong.

The inaugural Lady Gregory Research Fellowships have been awarded to three students for Ph.D. research in the humanities, languages & literatures and social & behavioural sciences. Jacopo Bisagni, Miriam Clyne, and Stacey Furlong are the first recipients

of the awards, which were named in honour of Lady Gregory in recognition of her contribution to the Arts and her links with the West of Ireland. The Fellowships are worth €20,000 a year for three years, for each Fellowship award winner.

Jacopo Bisagni, a native of La Spezia, Italy is a linguistics graduate of the University of Pisa. His Ph.D. research is the production of the first complete philological edition of the famous Old Irish text, *Amra Coluimh Chille* (Elegy on the Death of Saint Columba). Miriam Clyne, from Craughwell, Co. Galway, holds a BA from UCD and an MA from NUI Galway. Her Ph.D. will involve an interdisciplinary examination of Irish medieval premonstratensian monasteries and their European context. Stacey Furlong, from Galway city, is a graduate of NUI Galway, with particular interests in social and political theory. Her Ph.D. will examine the constitution and reproduction of fundamentalism in capitalist post-modernity. Professor John Marshall, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, said the scheme had attracted national and international interest and that the Fellowships "will further enhance the already high research profile of the Faculty of Arts."

Debating dimensions of Islam



Pictured with Professor Tariq Ramadan (centre) are Dr Kathleen Cavanaugh, conference director, and Professor William Schabas, Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway.

The social, political and religious dimensions of Islam were discussed by some of the most influential writers and thinkers on the subject at a conference in September, which remembered the fourth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. "Reframing Islam: Politics into Law," was hosted by the Irish Centre for Human Rights and was addressed by speakers including the leading Iranian activist, Dr Mohsen Kadivar, who was imprisoned in Tehran for criticising the regime and acclaimed Islamic scholar, Professor Tariq Ramadan, who is regarded as one of the most important voices in Islam.

The conference sought to challenge

and move beyond the stereotypes that currently grip the discourse on Islam; terrorism, enforced democracy building, Islamophobia, and militant regimes. Delegates also explored what Islamic political thought is, how it originated, developed and changed over the past 1400 years, particularly since 2001. Dr Kathleen Cavanaugh, of the Irish Centre for Human Rights and conference director said it was a great privilege to welcome such esteemed writers and thinkers to the University. "This conference provided a space that went beyond the idea of right thinking and wrong thinking and lent some empirical and theoretical weight to the current debate on Islam."

Director of Technology Transfer appointed



Dr Daniel O'Mahony

NUI Galway's first Director of Technology Transfer has been appointed. Dr Daniel O'Mahony, a native of Cork, is a graduate of UCC in Molecular Biology/Molecular Genetics/Biotechnology and a UCD Masters graduate in Technology Management. He has worked with Elan Corporation plc as Vice-President for Experimental Biology and later VP Technology and Asset Divestments and later with Taro Pharmaceuticals Ireland, as Director of Research and Development. In addition Dr O'Mahony has consulted with both management consultant and venture capital companies.

In the coming months, Dr O'Mahony and his team will be meeting with the research groups on campus, helping them to protect intellectual property and to identify commercial and licensing opportunities, technology transfer opportunities and new start-up companies, resulting from the campus research programmes. In addition, the Technology Transfer team will be conducting workshops on topics including patenting, protecting intellectual property, starting your own company, financing start-ups and taxation. He replaces Dr Joe Watson, the former Director of the Industrial Liaison Office.

Addressing the needs of families in adversity

The HSE /NUI Galway Child and Family Research and Policy Unit hosted a summer conference that examined how best families in need can be supported.

The symposium brought together graduate students and practitioners from Ireland, Northern Ireland and the USA, with the aim of learning and sharing approaches and lessons from vibrant family support and community practice in Ireland and the USA. To date, there has been little face-to-face cross-national exchange of knowledge and skills, leading to poor sharing of relevant theory and best practices among practitioners who work with families. As well as learning more about how community-based family support is considered and operates in another country, symposium participants were exposed to practice which gave them an opportunity to reflect on how best to import key innovations and lessons learned into their own work.

Geology of Connemara in 3D

A CD Rom that explores the geological evolution of the Connemara landscape has been developed by Dr Martin Feely and Ronan Hennessy of the Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences.

Produced as part of the Galway County Heritage Plan 2004 - 2008, 'Galway County in Stone: Geological Heritage of Connemara - Series 1: Twelve Bens,' the CD Rom was launched during Heritage Week 2005.

The offline CD Rom website covers the period between the region's offshore marine environment 750 million years ago and the recent glacial activity of the Ice Age 10,000 years ago.

The multimedia CD focuses on the Twelve Bens and Inagh Valley region of Connemara and an interactive virtual landscape allows viewers to fly around a 3D digital model of the Twelve Bens that displays either the landcover in the form of aerial photographs, or the underlying geology in the form of a geological map.

The CD Rom is available free of charge to primary and secondary schools throughout County Galway, as well as to public museums, libraries and tourist information offices.

French lecturer wins Grand Prix



Dr Jane Conroy

Dr Jane Conroy, senior lecturer at the Department of French is the first woman and first native English speaker to be awarded the prestigious Académie Française prize for scholarly work in French.

Dr Conroy was honoured with the Grand Prix de la Francophonie de L'Académie Française for her research into intercultural interactions, real and imaginary, between France and other countries, especially Ireland and Britain. This is the first time since its foundation in 1986 that the award, worth €22,500, has been awarded to someone from Ireland, the UK or the US. To be elected to the Académie, whose membership is

restricted to 40, is considered the highest achievement in one's career. Dr Conroy is humanities secretary for the Royal Irish Academy and is one of a team of editors of the Irish Journal of French Studies. She will receive her award in a special ceremony at the Institute de France in Paris in December.

The Académie Française, one of France's oldest institutions, was founded in 1653 by Cardinal Richelieu. Its principal mission is the protection and advancement of the French language through its encouragement of French writing and a variety of awards and grants.

Chinese students come to Commerce



Pictured from left are, Min Jin from Zhen Jiang, Emma Yang from Shenyang, Tian Lan from Beijing and Michelle Lu from Tie Ling.

The Faculty of Commerce welcomed its first Chinese students into the 3rd year B.Comm class this September. The four girls are part of a group of 17 students who have completed the first two years of the B Comm at the Shannon College of Hotel Management. Before commencing their studies in Shannon, the girls spent time in various language schools in Dublin, developing their English language skills. Their three years spent at Shannon included one year on placement in Irish hotels.

The Strategic Plan 2003-2008 commits the University to attracting increased numbers of international students. China represents an important market, particularly for postgraduate students. For example, there are currently over 32,000 students from China in higher education in the UK. The NUI Galway International Affairs Office has identified China as a key market and is responsible for attracting students and developing links already established with world-class universities in China.

Small Science - Big ideas

Ready Set Bio! is an exciting new primary science programme developed by the Regenerative Medicine Institute (REMEDI) which introduces a hands-on approach to teaching science in the classroom.

The programme, which supports the 4th - 6th class primary science curriculum, was officially launched in September at the BA Festival of Science in Dublin.

REMEDI hopes that by showing younger children that science can be both exciting and challenging, more children will be encouraged to take science subjects at secondary school.

The programme is supported by a colourful interactive website www.readysetbio.ie which provides teachers with support material to continue their students' learning after REMEDI has left the classroom.

In a separate initiative, applications are invited from senior cycle secondary school students for a national science essay-writing competition under the theme of "Stem Cells: Hype or Hope?" Closing date for receipt of entries is Friday, October 28th 2005. Details can be found on the education section of www.remеди.ie

International Psychologists meet in Galway



Pictured from left are: Professor Ruth Curtis, (conference organiser) and Professor Jack James, Department of Psychology, NUI Galway, with keynote speakers, Professor Shelley Taylor, UCLA, and Professor James Pennebaker, University of Texas.

Cutting edge research on a wide variety of topics which are impacting health and the quality of family life in society, was presented at the European Health Psychology Conference in NUI Galway in August. The 'Enhancing Individual, Family and Community Health' conference was attended by 620 delegates from 34 countries. Academics, healthcare professionals and organisational psychologists discussed a range of issues including the stress of illness; sexual health; perceptions, attitudes and the experience of aging; quality of life following childhood illness;

coping with cancer and chronic pain; influences of exercise and physical activity; and public attitudes towards advances in genetic technology. Professor Ruth Curtis, Conference President and member of the Department of Psychology, said it was an honour to host such a prestigious event which recognised the outstanding contribution that the Department has made to health psychology in Ireland. NUI Galway was the first university in Ireland to introduce a professional training programme in Health Psychology.

CD Rom to aid oral examiners



Pictured from left are, Dr Liam Glynn and Dr Maureen Kelly, Department of General Practice; and Mr James McGrath, CELT.

A CD Rom that offers training to oral examiners has been developed by the Department of General Practice, NUI Galway, in association with the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). Developed by Dr Maureen Kelly and

Dr Liam Glynn, Department of General Practice and Mr James McGrath, CELT, the CD Rom enables examiners to recognise the potential sources of error in oral exams, utilise a variety of techniques to minimise these errors, and plan and carry out an oral examination in accordance with best practice.

The CD Rom addresses the need for examiners to learn about communication within the oral examination setting, how to plan questions and grade responses and the potential sources of errors in oral examinations.

The interactive CD Rom includes a questions and answers section, a video library with examples of where difficulties can arise, a tutorial section based on current literature and a list of relevant publications and websites.

New Head of Student Counselling

Bea Gavin is the newly appointed Head of Student Counselling. She has lived in Galway for the past five years developing a successful private practice as a psychotherapist and counsellor. She has also worked for the Western Health Board. Prior to that, she worked in London in a variety of settings such as general practice and a therapy centre for women. She also provided consultancy and management development services for voluntary and public sector organisations.



Bea Gavin

Committing to Health and Safety



Pictured are, from left, front row: Alice Daly, Health & Safety Advisor; The President, Dr Ó Muircheartaigh; Professor Jim Ward, Vice-President for Physical Resources. Back row: John Dring, Health & Safety representative; Mary O'Riordan, Vice-President for Student Services and Human Resources; and Aodh Dalton, Health & Safety representative.

To coincide with the introduction of the new Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 on September 1st, NUI Galway has revised its Safety Statement Policy, to incorporate the provisions of the new Act.

The new policy was signed into effect by the President, who also signed an NUI Galway Safety Management Strategic Plan 2005-2008 which has been developed by the Health and Safety Office.

Hyde papers presented to University



Pictured from left are, Marie Reddan, James Hardiman Library; the President, Dr Ó Muircheartaigh; and Evelyn Morrisroe.

A valuable collection of personal letters and other material belonging to a close friend of Douglas Hyde, An Craobhín Aoibhinn, eminent Gaelic scholar and first President of Ireland, has been presented to the University. The collection has come from the family of Tom Morrisroe who was born and raised in Ratra, near

Frenchpark, Co Roscommon, close to the home of Dr Hyde. The papers presented include family photographs showing Tom Morrisroe fishing and socialising with the Hyde family, indicating a close social relationship. The Morrisroe-Hyde papers include an extensive collection of letters in Irish from Dr Hyde, who had taught Irish to Morrisroe, as well as material relating to Hyde's visit to the US to fundraise for the revival of the Irish language. The papers will join the Hyde manuscript collection and other related material already held in the archives of the James Hardiman Library.

The President, Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, thanked the Morrisroe family for the papers which he said would substantially enrich the Library's holdings relating to Dr Hyde and the early years of the Irish language revival.

Women's Studies Centre launches feminist books



Pictured are Dr Rebecca Pelan (left) and Dr Jane Conroy who launched the publications.

The latest two publications from the Women's Studies Centre, *Women Emerging* and *Irish Feminist Review* were launched by Dr Jane Conroy in September.

Women Emerging brings together excerpts from feminist research in Ireland, published in the *Women's Studies Review* between 1992 and 2004. While other feminist journals came and went, *Women's Studies Review* prevailed for nine volumes, all of which were committed to the dissemination of feminist research

both within Ireland and beyond. *Irish Feminist Review*, the Centre's new peer-reviewed journal continues the tradition of including academic articles and creative work and will retain a commitment to publishing the work of new researchers alongside that of established scholars and activists. In addition, it will include a section called 'Cauldron', designed to be a forum for the discussion of a topical issue.

Other research being carried out at the Centre includes its role in the European Women's Studies project ATHENA, which incorporates 19 different activities related to Women's Studies in a European context. The centre is primarily involved in the 'Memories, Histories, Narratives' initiative which is devoted to the development of narrative/oral history methodologies as an educational tool in Women's Studies.

This area of activity will produce a textbook, due to be published next year, and web-based materials designed to meet the needs of students and teachers utilising narrative/oral history methodologies.

In brief...

Fulbright scholars at NUI Galway

The University welcomes two American Fulbright Scholars who will spend the next few months on campus. Professor Don Goldstein from Allegheny College, Pennsylvania, joins the Centre for Innovation and Structural Change while Mr Brian Goldstein from Duke University, North Carolina will carry out research at REMEDI. The closing date for applications for this year's programme is 18th November 2005. Further details and applications are available at www.fulbright.ie

NCBES education bursary

The NCBES has been granted a €1,200 bursary to develop a lecture for the Royal Dublin Society's 'Science Live' series. The bursaries are awarded to science educators to develop educational and entertaining science demonstration lectures. The lecture will be held at the RDS in October as part of their Science Live series which is attended by over 5,000 students, and will also be brought to schools in Galway as part of the NCBES outreach programme.

New horizons for geophysicists

A New Horizons Post-graduate Work-in-Progress conference, hosted by the Department of Earth and Ocean Science in September was the first formal academic meeting organised jointly by Irish and British geophysicists. Talks and posters were presented by 65 students who covered a wide range of topics dealing with the solid earth, atmospheres and oceans, planetary science, hydrology and environmental geoscience.

New postgraduate prospectuses available

The "For Entry 2006" postgraduate prospectuses will be available in early October. This year, the cover of each Faculty prospectus depicts a Research Centre associated with the Faculty to highlight research activity in that Centre and in that Faculty.

End of an era



The day the Porter's Desk in the Archway closed for the last time was a nostalgic one for many and a particularly emotional one for Peadar Ó Fatharta, Head Porter who grew up in the building under the Clock Tower. The Ó Fatharta family lived at the Archway from 1959 -1970. Peadar's father, Pádraic was Head Porter and his mother Brid always had a welcome and a cup of tea for those who had time to chat. Peadar's colleagues, brothers John and Joe Devaney have also worked for thirty years in portorage. The Porters are getting used to their gleaming new mailroom, but miss the constant flow of people at the Archway.

Pictured are Peadar Ó Fatharta (centre) with brothers Joe and John Devaney.

Milestone volume published



Pictured are the President, Dr Ó Muirheartaigh with Professor Dáibhí Ó Cróinín

The publication of *A New History of Ireland, Vol. 1*, edited by Professor Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, marks the culmination of the

largest scholarly venture in modern Irish history. Conceived in the 1960s under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy, and

begun in the 1970s, the completed *New History* consists of nine volumes. The project has involved over one hundred contributors, in Ireland and abroad, mainly historians, but also including specialists in a wide range of other disciplines and subjects, such as archaeology and architecture, geography and geology, languages and literatures, the visual arts, and music.

This represents a collaborative undertaking on a scale never before attempted in this country. This first volume, covering Irish history and prehistory from the first human settlements before 7000 B.C. down to the Anglo-Norman invasion in the 12th century, spans a far longer period than those allocated to the later volumes of the *New History*, and the task of editing it has, therefore, been a more challenging one. This volume has been long awaited but its publication now reflects the many developments that have taken place in the study of Early Irish History and Prehistory in the past 30 years and more.

PhD student awarded Canadian scholarship



Declan Webb, a PhD student in the French Department, who is conducting research on 'Minority Language Visibility, Service Prioritisation and the Work of the Commissioners for Official Languages in Ireland and Canada,' has received a number of awards in recent months.

Declan, who holds an IRCHSS (Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences) Fellowship 2005/06, was also awarded an International Council of Canadian Studies Student Participation Scholarship, for his participation in the Biennial Conference, Ottawa.

Most recently, he was presented with an Ireland Canada University Foundation (ICUF) scholarship worth €5,000 at a ceremony in Dublin attended by An Taoiseach and the Canadian Prime Minister.

Pictured at the award ceremony are, from left, Declan Webb, Award recipient; Mr. Paul Martin, Prime Minister of Canada, and An Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern.