



National University of Ireland, Galway
Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh

OLLSCÉALA

Nuachtlitr Foirne – Staff Newsletter – Aibreán 2007



Pictured at the Gala Banquet were Prof. Ger Hurley, VP for Strategic Initiatives & External Affairs and Chair of the Banquet Committee; Blathnaid Ní Chofaigh, RTÉ presenter and MC for the night; and Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, President.

University Gala Banquet Features Alumni Awards

NUI Galway's eighth annual Gala Banquet, took place at the Radisson SAS Hotel on Saturday, 3rd March 2007, and featured the presentation of the Annual Alumni Awards as well as celebrating student volunteerism 'ALIVE' as the banquet theme.

This year's event was filmed by RTÉ for a special NUI Galway edition of TG4's Ardán. The weekend celebrations included visits by the award winners to their respective faculties and the annual award winner's lunch in the Aula Maxima, NUI Galway.

The award winners on the night were: Dr Pat Gullane, Medtronic Vascular Award for Health Care and Medical Science; Dr Reg Shaw, Seavite Award for Natural Science; Irial Finan, Bank of Ireland Award for Business and Commerce; Seán O'Rourke, AIB Award for Literature, Communications and the Arts; Paddy and Tom Coffey, TBD Award for Engineering, IT and Mathematics; Máiréad Ní Nuadháin, Duais Hewlett-Packard don Ghaeilge; and Brian O'Donnell, NUI Galway Award for Law, Public Service and Government.

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OLLSCÉALA

Focal ón Eagarthóir



Fáilte chuig eagrán an Earraigh!

Welcome to the latest and 'new look' edition of Ollscéala.

The campus has been very busy this semester, and I do hope this edition of Ollscéala will give a flavour of the busy season thus far.

The Annual Gala Banquet featuring the alumni awards was the big event of March and this features as our cover story. We also had the Entrance Scholarships, high profile visits including Hollywood star Fionnuala Flanagan (on p.7) and Active Citizenship Chair and former Special Olympics Director, Mary Davis.

The annual Múscailt festival provided a burst of colourful activity in February (p.12) and the second Buy a Book Day exceeded all expectations in March (p.2).

The President's column returns in this edition (p.7) and we look forward to increasing this to a double spread in future issues.

Finally, the Press & Information Office has relocated to the Archway and we will be announcing our official opening in due course.

Mo bhuíochas do chách a chur scéalta chugainn don eagrán seo agus tá síil agam go mbeinn in ndán freastal ar níos mó sa chéad eagrán eile.

Michelle Ní Chróinín
Eagarthóir

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Buy a Book



Mary O'Riordan, VP for Student Services & Human Resources and the President discuss purchases at Buy a Book Day

Following on from its inaugural success last year, the University's second Buy a Book Day was held recently and exceeded all expectations by raising €8,476 for charity and Special Collections at the James Hardiman Library.

Staff, students and the general public were generous both in terms of donations of material for sale and support for the event itself as hundreds of people browsed the aisles in the Aula Maxima throughout the day.

Last year's event raised almost €6,000, half of which was donated to international, national and local charities through the University's United Charities Group (UCG). Formed in 2004, UCG consolidates the fundraising efforts of the three University-based charitable committees: the Third World Appeal Committee, the IFUT Charitable Committee and Medicus Mundi. The remainder was used to purchase items of interest for Special Collections at the James Hardiman Library.

The event is one of the more novel ideas to emanate from the University's Staff Suggestion Scheme – Úrsmainte – and received generous support from local businesses.

“ Although this is indeed the last year of my presidency, as a former athlete I always think of the last lap as the one in which you give your all... ”

President's
Message
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Drama á léiriú ag an Acadamh

Bhí dráma nua *Crosántacht* leis an scríbhneoir iomráiteach Bidy Jenkinson á léiriú ag an gcúrsa Ard-Diplóma sa Drámaíocht i mí na Márta. Is ócáid ar leith é léiriú an dráma seo mar gurb é seo léiriú cinn chúrsa an Ard-Diplóma sa Drámaíocht, cúrsa nua atá á reáchtáil ag Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge i gcomhar le Scoil na Gaeilge.



Ethnographic Research Unit at the ICSG

The Irish Centre for Social Gerontology (ICSG) has been awarded a €1.5 million grant from the Intel Corporation, with the support of the IDA, as part of the newly launched Technology and Research for Independent Living (TRIL) centre. TRIL is a virtual centre, established as part of Intel's European Health Research and Innovation Capacity, which will involve significant research capabilities to address the challenges of 'independent living' for older people. The project involves cross-collaboration among NUI Galway, UCD and Trinity College.

The funding will allow the ICSG to expand its interests in technology and ageing, a primary research theme of the Centre, along with the economics of ageing and rural ageing. It also builds on the existing expertise of the staff of the ICSG, helping to establish the group as an international centre of excellence in the realm of social ageing. In addition, the funding demonstrates the growing interest of the private sector in the area and the increasingly multidisciplinary approach taken in ageing research endeavours.

OLLSCÉALA

ACCESS

“ Storytelling is the intrinsic glue that encourages us to learn to listen, to respect and to understand... ”

Clare Murphy, storyteller

Parents, siblings, teachers and University staff enjoyed a debut storytelling performance by children involved in the Access Office programme recently, where stories ranging from the frightening to the funny were told by candlelight.

The sixth class pupils from Scoil Bhride, Shantalla; Holy Trinity Girls School; and St Michael's Boys School, Mervue have been developing their storytelling skills through workshops led by storytellers Clare Murphy and Rab Fulton, as part of the 'Uni For You' initiative.

Clare Murphy, storyteller, said: "By retelling old tales and inventing their own, children engage their imagination and find confidence in their own innate storytelling abilities. Storytelling is the intrinsic glue that encourages us to learn to listen, to respect and to understand those around us in our community."

The Access Office's three-year structured programme of activities aims to positively promote third-level education to children and their communities.



Agreement between IT Department and Beijing Institute of Technology

At a recent ceremony in Beijing, the Department of Information Technology signed an agreement with one of China's most prestigious institutions, Beijing Institute of Technology. The agreement allows BIT graduates to pursue a customised MSc in Software Design and Development in NUI Galway. Pictured at the signing ceremony are Dr Owen Molloy, Dept of IT; Ms Anna Cunningham, Director International Office; and Prof. Qinglin Wang, Director International Office, BIT. Dr Molloy and Dr Hugh Melvin both spent time in BIT last year, teaching courses in Software Engineering, and Hardware & Communications, respectively.



Active Citizenship Chair on Campus

A key member of the team that brought the Special Olympics to Ireland, Ms Mary Davis, visited the University recently where she took part in the Community Knowledge Initiative's (CKI) Keynote Seminar series.

Ms Davis's talk 'Perspectives on Active Citizenship in Ireland Today' focused on

themes related to civic engagement and active citizenship. The CKI series, which featured former Taoiseach and NUI Chancellor, Dr Garret Fitzgerald and Galway hurling star Alan Kerins in previous seminars, is offered as a response to the impact that volunteering has in today's communities.

Ms Davis has played a pivotal role in terms of raising awareness, and creating a supportive sporting environment for those with diverse abilities. She has been recognised nationally for stimulating a culture of volunteerism in modern Irish society through the hosting of the Special Olympics World Games in Ireland in 2003.

As Chair of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship, which seeks to address the perceived decline in levels of social capital in Ireland, Ms Davis spoke of her personal and professional experiences of citizenship, her role in the culmination of the Special Olympics event and her vision for the future of engaged and active citizens in modern Irish society through the work of the Taskforce.



From left, Lorraine McIlrath, Academic Staff Developer at CKI; Iain MacLabhrainn, Director of CELT; and Mary Davis.

Appointments

● *Dr John Newell from the Department of Mathematics has been awarded the position of Adjunct Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.*

● *Professor Tom Boylan, Department of Economics, has been reappointed by the Minister of Education and Science to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) for a second term. The newly reconstructed Authority marks a historic development arising from the Institutes of Technology Act of 2006, under which the Institutes come within the responsibility of the HEA, thus integrating for the first time under a single body the Irish Higher Education Sector. Professor Boylan is a former Dean of the Faculty of Arts and was the first Dean of Research at NUI Galway.*

● *Professor Gerard Quinn of the Law Faculty and a member of the Human Rights Commission has been appointed to two prestigious committees in recognition of his work on international disability law. Prof. Quinn has been made the 'focal point' for the work of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) on disability. He was also appointed to the prestigious Advisory Council of the London-based NGO Interights, which specialises in mounting test cases around the world on discrimination issues. He joins former President Mary Robinson, Lord Anthony Lester QC, Dean Harold Koh (Yale) and Professor Philip Alston (NYU), among others on the incoming Council.*

● *Prof. Gearóid Ó Laighin (Gerard M. Lyons) has recently been appointed Professor of Electronic Engineering. Prof. Lyons has a primary degree in Electrical Engineering and an M.Eng.Sc. in Microelectronics from University College Cork.*

He was awarded a Ph.D. from the National University of Ireland, Galway in 2000. His research interests are in Biomedical Engineering with a special interest in Rehabilitation Engineering Science and Vascular Electronics.

Entrance Scholarships



Entrance Scholarship Ceremony

Academic excellence among the entering class of 2006/7 was recently recognised at a special ceremony to honour the 57 recipients of Entrance Scholarships at the University.

Students from six faculties were honoured by the President, Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, who presented each of them with a cheque for €1,525 and a specially designed scroll to mark their achievement in their school-leaving examination.

The wide geographical spread of the winners was notable with winners hailing from 18 counties, from Antrim to Cork and Donegal to Waterford, including 23 scholars from County Galway.

The scholarships are guaranteed to all new entrants who reach 560 points (590 in Medicine and Health Sciences). Twelve students of programmes in Arts, Commerce, Engineering, and Medicine & Health Sciences achieved the maximum 600 points (in addition to six others with a maximum A-level result), while 13 students attained 590 points.

The ceremony also featured the conferring of degrees and diplomas on 63 students in four faculties, while University scholarships worth €250 were presented to 368 students across six faculties who performed outstandingly well in their pre-degree exams 2005/06.

“ The wide geographical spread of the winners was notable with winners hailing from 18 counties... ”

Focal ón Uachtarán

Fáilte romhaibh go dtí eagrán eile de Ollscéala. Níl aon easpa scéal nua san eagrán seo, agus b'fhéidir nár mhiste domsa mo léargas féin a thabhairt dhíbh ar chuid acu.

I am pleased to welcome another edition of Ollscéala. As I enter the last year of my presidency (I retire, although I would prefer to use the expression move on, from this post in March 2008), I would like to refer briefly to a number of recent events.

As you will probably have observed, work has commenced on our new Sports Centre (on the site where the crèche used to be), and the current hole in the ground will be our new 25m swimming pool, which will be open hopefully by early 2008.

Last year Údarás na hOllscoile approved a €400m capital programme, aimed at addressing the very significant physical infrastructure deficit on the campus. There is still much to be done in terms of raising both the State contribution and the private funding required to complete this programme, but Údarás and indeed UMT have no doubt that the programme can, and indeed MUST be undertaken.

A key strategic priority in our strategic plan 2003 – 2008 was to maximise our contribution in local, regional, national and international spheres. A number of recent events underline our continuing commitment to this priority:

- The conferring of diplomas in Community Development in Kosovo.
- Conferring of NUI Degrees and Diplomas on students at Shannon College of Hotel Management, an institution with which talks on amalgamation with NUI Galway are at an advanced stage.
- Conferring of Master of Fine Arts Degrees at the Burren College of Art, another fine institution in Co. Clare with whom we are strengthening our links.

Thug mé cuairt le déanaí ar na hionaid Gaeltachta atá againn i dTír Chonaill (Gaoth Dobhair) agus i gConamara (An Ceathrú Rua agus Carna), agus caithfidh mé a rá gur chuaigh an sár-obair atá ar siúl ionta go mór i bhfeidhm orm; deirim comhghairdeachas ó chroí le gach éinne atá bainteach leo.

There are many other events and developments to which I would like to draw attention, however, limitations of space (which apply as much to an tUachtarán as to anyone else) leave me unable to do so. For the next (and final) year of my presidency, I intend to issue a monthly email, outlining events that have taken place and developments that are underway, a sort of "blog" to overcome the restrictions imposed by the editor of Ollscéala. Although this is indeed the last year of my presidency, as a former athlete I always think of the last lap as the one in which you give your all, so I am determined that this coming year will be for me personally, and hopefully for the University also, one characterised by the achievement of significant milestones. Beidh tuilleadh le rá agam faoi seo sna ríomh-phostanna míosúla.

In March 2007, Adult Education Certificates and Diplomas were conferred on 54 students in Prishtina, Kosovo. Pictured during the ceremony were (L to R): Professor Chris Curtin, Academic Director, Diploma in Community Development Practice; Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, President; Bujar Dugolli, Minister of Trade, Kosovo Government; Ismet Beqiri, Mayor of Prishtina; and Sead Shehu, ICCED, Kosovo.



Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh with Hollywood actress Fionnuala Flanagan during her visit to the Huston School of Film and Digital Media, in February.



Albert Conneely, Glenman Construction and Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh at the Sports Centre building site.

GP Guide on Treating Asylum Seekers

Doctors in Galway are to benefit from a new guide on treating asylum seekers and refugees written by Dr Hans-Olaf Pieper, a Fellow in Asylum Seeker and Refugee Healthcare at the Department of General Practice.

Compiled by the HSE, NUI Galway and the Galway Refugee Support Group, the 45 page 'Information Pack for GPs in Galway on General Practice Care for Asylum Seekers and Refugees' offers information on the broad range of health needs of asylum seekers and refugees, and a comprehensive list of local support organisations and services.

The document also provides relevant information on issues such as women's health, male circumcision, torture, communicable disease assessment, and immunisation. GPs will also have a template and guide for completing medico-legal reports used in the asylum determination process in supporting a history of physical or mental abuse, or torture. If it proves successful, the guide may be adapted for use nationally.



Priya Prendergast, HSE West and Dr Hans-Olaf Pieper, Dept. of General Practice, at the launch of the GP Guide.

Awards

● Award for Microbial Glycobiology

Professor Anthony Moran, Department of Microbiology has recently been awarded the Sir Allan Sewell award for his work in Microbial Glycobiology by Griffith University, Australia. The award recognises his research on *Campylobacter jejuni* and the link between infection with this bacterium and the development of the paralytic disorder, Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS). Worldwide, *Campylobacter jejuni* is the commonest bacterial cause of gastroenteritis and diarrhoeal disease, outnumbering the cases of salmonellosis and shigellosis combined. In the developed world, it is the leading cause of bacterial food-poisoning and, in certain individuals, this infection leads to the neurological disorder GBS which causes paralysis and requires intensive care of patients. In the US alone, this infection costs the economy \$8 billion per annum.

● Department of General Practice claims Research Award

Professor Andrew Murphy, on behalf of the Department of General Practice, has received the 2006 *Irish Journal of Medical Science* award for best general practice research paper for *A cross-sectional study of secondary cardiac care in general practice: impact of personal and practice characteristics*, published in the international journal *Family Practice*.

Collaborators included Molly Byrne, Jane Walsh (Department of Psychology) and Cecily Kelleher (Department of Health Promotion). This prize has now been awarded to the Department of General Practice for three of the last four years.

● Lifetime Achievement Award

Mr Philip Larkin, lecturer in the Department of Nursing & Midwifery Studies has been awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award in Palliative Care. This prize is sponsored by Macmillan, an international research supporting body.

● ICT Award

Mr Chris Barry, lecturer in Management Information Systems, Department of Accountancy and Finance was recently awarded 'Academic Contribution to ICT in Galway' at the Annual Information Technology Association of Galway (ITAG) Awards.

Music for Galway Archive presented to University



Marie Reddan, Librarian at James Hardiman Library; Prof. Jim Browne, Registrar; and Jane O Leary, Music for Galway.

“ The Music for Galway archive is a major addition to the Library’s existing archival collections... which highlight the artistic and cultural life of Galway over the years. ”

Ballymun students benefit from new Housing Law course

In an innovative use of teaching technology, Dr Padraic Kenna’s LLB course in Housing Law & Policy is being video-conferenced on a weekly basis to the Ballymun Civic Centre. The initiative is part of the Law Faculty’s contribution to the Community Knowledge Initiative.

This new course, the first in Ireland on Housing Law and Policy, is being taken by 60 LLB and BCL students. It covers the traditional housing and property law areas, such as mortgages and conveyancing, as well as social housing and modern approaches to social inclusion in housing. The Ballymun Community Law Centre has arranged for 25 participants to attend some of the course through a video-link with the Ballymun Civic Centre. This link is live and interactive, allowing participation between students and community lawyers, activists and others.

To mark the 25th anniversary of Music for Galway, the archive was recently presented to the James Hardiman Library at NUI Galway. The Archive was accepted by the Registrar and Deputy President, Professor Jim Browne at a reception in the Aula Maxima attended by friends of the University and Music for Galway, who enjoyed a musical interlude from Galway’s Quartet in Residence, ConTempo.

The archive is a rich mix of programmes, posters, reviews, press cuttings, photographs, correspondence and minute books. It is a major addition to the Library’s existing archival collections of An Taibhdhearc, Druid, Galway Arts Festival and Macnas, which highlight the artistic and cultural life of Galway over the years.

Music for Galway began 25 years ago with a concert by the Ulster Orchestra, intended to raise funds for a Steinway grand piano for Galway. The piano moved into the Aula Maxima, NUI Galway in 1981 and, since then, hundreds of concert performances have been organised by Music for Galway with performers from all over the world.

Habitat for Humanity

“ Response to the project from the University community has been huge with... over 110 people applying for places on the team ”

The University's Chaplaincy, in conjunction with the charity Habitat for Humanity is to lead a group of 21 student volunteers to Ghana this summer to help local people build their own homes. The students will spend two weeks in the western African country, working and living on the construction site with the homeowners' families.

Response to the project from the University community has been huge with well over 250 people attending a preliminary information evening and over 110 people applying for places on the team.

The NUI Galway group comprises 24 people, including three team leaders: Sr Avril O'Regan, Dean of Residence/Chaplain NUI Galway; Mr Peter Mannion, Students' Union Education Officer NUI Galway; and Fr Gabriel Kinahan, the Abbey. The 21 students chosen for the team are drawn from a variety of Faculties and counties.

Parties interested in supporting this work may make a donation by sending it to Habitat for Humanity, c/o Sr Avril O'Regan, Dean of Residence, NUI Galway. All monies received will go directly to this project. Further information can be obtained from Sr Avril O'Regan on 091 492168 (avril.oregan@nuigalway.ie); Peter Mannion on 091 493707 (peter.mannion@nuigalway.ie); or by visiting www.habitatireland.ie.

Pictured at the Charity launch from left, Karen Kennedy, Habitat for Humanity representative; Sr Avril O'Regan; Mayor Niall O Brolcháin; Mr Peter Mannion; and Fr Gabriel Kinahan.



DERI researcher addresses MIT conference

Dr John Breslin, a researcher at the Digital Enterprise Research Institute (DERI), recently gave a talk at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) as a member of an expert panel on IT entrepreneurship. The IT panel was part of an annual conference on technology and entrepreneurship for students at MIT. In parallel with

the visit, Professor Stefan Decker, Director of DERI, and Dr Breslin also met with the inventor of the World Wide Web, Sir Tim Berners-Lee, with whom they discussed current developments in DERI and future directions for research. Sir Berners-Lee is the director of the World Wide Web Consortium and a member of the advisory board for DERI.

In Brief

- The University's array of postgraduate and postdoctoral courses were under the spotlight at this year's Graduate Studies Fair in February. An estimated 2,500 students attended the Fair to explore the 400 programmes, as well as the full-time and part-time research options available. In recent years the government has prioritised postgraduate research-driven education, or 'fourth level' education, to meet the demand for highly skilled employees to support economic growth.
- Seosamh Mac Donnacha, Comhordaitheoir Acadúil with Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge has been invited by the Irish American Cultural Institute to participate in the 2007 Irish Perceptions Series. The nationwide lecture and performance series features Ireland's finest scholars, authors, performers and actors. In his lecture series, Seosamh will be discussing the successes and failures of Irish language planning and the challenges that face the Irish language in today's 'globalised world'. Seosamh has recently co-authored a number of research reports on various aspects of language planning in the Gaeltacht.
- The 3rd Irish Symposium on Undergraduate Mathematics Education was hosted recently by the Mathematics Department. The conference provided an opportunity for mathematics lecturers and education specialists to share experiences and views, and to hear about recent developments in mathematic education research and practice at third and fourth level. Sixty delegates from 16 third-level institutions from across Ireland and the UK attended the symposium where an array of presentations covered a broad range of topics concerned with advanced mathematics education.
- NUI Galway hosted its largest Science and Technology Careers Fair recently with students and graduates availing of valuable career opportunities presented by a host of national and international companies, which were actively recruiting on the day. According to research conducted by the Careers Service, the science fair proved to be a key link in matching many Science students with their employers. The Careers Service also provided a C.V. seminar on the day geared specifically for students and graduates of the Science and Technology sector.

Seoladh Scéim OÉ Gaillimh faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003

Tá Áras na Gaeilge ag obair ar scéim a aontaíodh faoi Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla 2003. Is é príomhaidhm na chéad Scéime seo go gcuirfí le soláthar seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge san Ollscoil i réimsí acadúla agus riaracháin agus sna seirbhísí ginearálta.

Cuirfidh Áras na Gaeilge tús le feachtas poiblíochta, feachtas póstaer agus bileog ina measc chun an pobal a chur ar an eolas faoi sheirbhísí dátheangacha atá agus a bheidh ar fáil do chustaiméirí de chuid na hOllscoile roimh chríoch na chéad Scéime.

Tá an scéim seo mar chuid lárnach d'fhís fhadthréimhseach OÉ Gaillimh, go dtiocfaidh forbairt agus borradh ar sheirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge.



● Bigger and Better – What do you Think?

The Press and Information Office welcomes any feedback on the new look Ollscéala. Comments can be emailed to the editor at michelle.nichroinin@nuigalway.ie

OLLSCÉALA

Múscailt '07

Fionnuala Gallagher, Arts Officer and Mary O'Riordan, VP for Student Services & Human Resources look on as Little John Nee entertains at the launch of Muscailt '07.

NUI Galway's seventh Springtime Arts Festival *Múscailt* (meaning 'to en/inspire/celebrate') took on a new dimension this year as it joined forces with the Celtic Fleadh Imboilg for a new and exciting programme.

This year's festival celebrated the Celtic Fertility Festival meeting Chinese New Year which saw the campus come alive with concerts, theatre, dance, exhibitions, storytelling, film and live performances.

Highlights of this year's festival included a production of *South Pacific* by the Galway University Musical Society, which featured a walk-on part by none other than the President; a commission of art pieces on *Transparency and Body* which exhibited in various buildings across the campus; and original theatre including the premier of *Living with Johnny Depp*, by Toot and Co, and *Taxi Rank* by Janíva Dance Company, which arrived fresh from a successful run at Project 06.



Sports History Conference

Scholars from all over the world attended the Third Annual Conference of Sports History Ireland which was held in connection with the Centre for Irish Studies. Sports History Ireland is a society dedicated towards the development of the study of the history of sport amongst amateur and professional historians.

Distinguished guest speakers included Dr Phil Dine, Department of French, NUI Galway; Professor Conal Hooper, Director, Centre for Sport Studies, UCD; Professor Mike Cronin, Boston College; and Dr Dilwyn Porter and Professor Richard Holt from the International Centre for Sport History and Culture, De Montfort University, Leicester.

One particularly controversial feature of this year's conference was Liam O'Callaghan's paper, 'Reflecting on the brave and the faithful: the invention of tradition in Munster rugby', which exposed the myth surrounding the Munster Rugby phenomenon.

Other topics addressed during the two-day conference included Sinn Féin's attempt to stop hunting in 1919; Ireland's last rugby international in Belfast; representations of Gaelic Games in narrative cinema; the journalistic career of Michael Cusack; the sporting pursuits of women in nineteenth century Ireland; and the relationship between sport and the Irish Anti-Apartheid movement, 1964-74.