

Newsletter

Winter 2024



Irish Society for Archives
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Edited by Dr Mary Clark

Contents:

Word from the Chair (Ellen Murphy) p. 2

Irish Society for Archives Lecture Series Autumn 2024

- Brendan Kennelly Literary Archives (Ciara Daly) pp 2-3
- Development plans for the National Library (Dr Audrey Whitty) pp 3-4

Focus on an Archive Service

- Closure of An Post Museum and Archives (Stephen Ferguson) pp 4-7

Focus on Collections

- John Tate's Charity Archive (Catherine Wright) pp 7-9
- Landed Estates Database (Marie Boran & Brigid Clesham) pp 9-10

Five-minute chat with an Archivist

- Gráinne Doran (Wexford County Council) pp 10-13

Heroes of Irish Archives

- Prof Dr Friedrich Kahlenberg (Aideen M. Ireland) pp 13-16

Reaching Out

- Open Days at the IAA (Colum O'Riordan) pp 17-18
- Exhibition: Fifty years of Nursing and Midwifery at the RCSI (Erin McRae) pp 18-19
- Centenary exhibition: Chapel of the Holy Family, Cabra pp 20-1
(Mary O'Byrne, David Gunning, and Ruth Flynn)

Published in 2024

- *Fear and Fever* (review by Dr Ronan P. Kelly) pp 21-2
- *Emma, Disappeared* (review by Dr Mary Clark) pp 23-4

Word from the Chair

I am delighted to write a few words having been re-elected Chair of the Irish Society for Archives for a second term following the 2024/2025 Annual General Meeting. I would like to warmly thank the outgoing committee for their diligent work on behalf of the society over the past 12 months.

The ISA aims to promote the place of archives in Irish Society, and this is achieved through our newsletter, journal, and lecture series. The 2024/2025 year promises to be a busy and fruitful one for the Irish Society for Archives. We have already held two excellent Autumn lectures by Ciara Daly and Dr Audrey Whitty, hosted at Dublin City Library and Archive. The ISA committee is currently planning a Spring lecture series, an ISA excursion to place of archival interest, and a refresh of our website. The Irish Society for Archives will partner with Tailte Éireann to publish a special edition of the *Irish Archives* journal to celebrate 200 years of official mapping activity in Ireland, and the first Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Further details on all these activities will be circulated to members shortly.

I am particularly delighted that the *Irish Society for Archives* newsletter has returned for its Winter 2024 edition after a short hiatus. I would like to thank Vera Moynes for her dedication in producing the newsletter over several years and thank Dr

Mary Clark for taking up the role of newsletter editor following the 2024 AGM.

Ellen Murphy

Irish Society for Archives, Chair.

Irish Society for Archives Lecture Series

Since its foundation in 1970, a lecture programme has been at the heart of the ISA's mission to encourage interest in the development of archives in Ireland. In each calendar year, two series of lectures are held, one in Spring, one in Autumn, usually in the Conference Room at Dublin City Library & Archives, for which hospitality the Society is really grateful. The lectures are arranged by the committee of the Irish Society for Archives.

Two lectures took place in Autumn 2024, each relating to recent innovative developments. On Thursday 17 October, Ciara Daly spoke about the literary archives of the well-known poet and academic, the late Brendan Kennelly, which are held in the library of Trinity College Dublin. Ciara has been project archivist for this important collection and in that capacity, she has completed the cataloguing of the literary section of the Kennelly Archives, the creation of a finding aid, promotion and outreach, and scoping for the remainder of the collection.



*Project archivist Ciara Daly alphabetising
Brendan Kennelly's unpublished poems*

This was no small task, as the collection consists in total of 457 archive boxes, which include drafts of published works; drafts of unpublished works; plays; novels; drafts of reviews, articles, speeches, essays, appreciations and tributes for colleagues and other Irish literary and cultural figures as well as material relating to his academic career and life as a public figure. This includes lecture notes and materials relating to his time teaching in Trinity and elsewhere, correspondence with family, colleagues, and the general public as well as with Irish writers, editors and publishers. There are posters and programmes, photographs, and a range of other material from Kennelly's literary life over several decades. The collection contains a small amount of audio material and some word-

processed material. Not only is it the largest boxed collection in the TCD library, but as Ciara noted it is likely to be the last fully based paper archive to be accessioned by the library. The literary material is now available for use in the Research Collections Reading Room in the Library of Trinity College Dublin and the finding aid is available on the Library's website.

On Thursday 14 November, Dr Audrey Whitty, Director of the National Library of Ireland, spoke about the history, important holdings and development of this well-loved cultural institution, with special reference to plans – already underway – to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2027 in a dynamic manner by opening it up to a wider audience. A new 100-seat lecture theatre and an enlarged ground floor manuscript reading room have already been created, and attention has now turned to the NLI's 'west wing' facing onto Kildare Street, which was part of the original building, opened in 1877. Planning permission has been granted for its redevelopment from vaults to attics across four floors, resulting in two standing exhibitions, one for Yeats and one for Heaney; spaces for temporary exhibitions; open spaces for visitors to sit and read, or discuss; along with a new café and bookshop. Another project, currently moving through the planning process, is to instal a soundproofed screen in the gallery overlooking the historic Reading Room, to enable visitors to see where

James Joyce, and other Irish literary figures, studied and wrote, without in any way disturbing present-day researchers. It is hoped that all this will be complimented by a new build bookstore behind the National Library, calibrated to the highest modern standards, which will enable much of the book stock, currently held off-site, to be returned to proximity to its parent institution. Exciting times indeed.



Dr Audrey Whitty, Director of the National Library of Ireland

Another series of ISA lectures will take place in Spring 2025 and advance notice will be sent to all members. If you haven't been to one of these before do give it a try – not only will you discover what's new in Irish archives, but you'll have an opportunity to connect with colleagues

over a convivial glass of wine or soft drink (the orange juice is especially good!). We look forward to seeing you at some of these talks in 2025.

Focus on an Archive Service: Closure of An Post Museum & Archive

An Post's decision to move its headquarters from the historic GPO in Dublin's city centre to rented space in a modern office block beside the docks is a puzzling one. It may be that the dictates of modern business or fashion required a move, but Francis Johnston's late Georgian building had accommodated many business changes in its two hundred year history and could, surely, have been adapted once again for the digital age. A consequence of the move has been closure of the Post Office's museum and archive and dispersal of much of the material to other national institutions. The 1916 exhibition in the GPO remains open as does the public Post Office counter but the majority of administrative staff have left and the OPW is considering the future of the building. It is worth briefly recording here, for the benefit of fellow historians and archivists, the history of the museum and where material has gone.

Shortly after independence, the Post Office initiated the creation of a small postal museum and Head Postmasters were asked to send up to the GPO items of potential historic interest. Only a few things emerged at that time since the Post Office had suffered, more than any other State department, during the "troubles"

and concentration and money were focused on restoring services. In the early 1980s a much more serious attempt was made to establish a postal museum: potential premises were identified and preparatory work undertaken but once again, the money to see the project through did not materialise.



Travelling Post Office rail carriage arrives at its new home in Downpatrick, county Down

Major operational changes in the 1990s, the introduction of IT and sorting systems, brought an end to administrative procedures which had changed little since their introduction in the later nineteenth century and gave me an opportunity to create a centralised historical archive. In 2010 we at last managed to open a small but attractive public postal museum in the GPO. This was to have been incorporated in the new Witness History exhibition

centre, created at the Government's request for 2016, but this regrettably did not happen, and the postal museum closed in 2015.

An Post's Museum & Archive comprised Post Office administrative files and records, a philatelic archive of postage stamps and related material and museum artifacts such as letter boxes, sorting benches, uniforms and so forth. While it is very disappointing that a national institution with a history and social reach as long and broad as the Post Office will not maintain its own Museum & Archive, the commercial realities of the postal business have meant investment in our heritage was always subject to financial and operational pressures. While there are many fine postal museums in the world, they were established when Post Offices were still part of central government, and their funding today is not dependent on the success or otherwise of businesses operating in a highly competitive and declining market.

The Post Office administrative archive is being donated to the National Archives and I am grateful to archivists there for the work they have done in assessing how our record system, built on ISAD(G) principles, can, in due course, be incorporated into the NAI catalogue. Our unique material, detailing the management of a complex, nationwide Post Office business from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century, will join other Posts & Telegraphs files already held in the NAI.

N^o 179
Alterations in the Allowances for the Postmaster of GREYSTONES.

Registered Number, Minute Number, and date of Secretary's Authority. } 32189/Od. Sec. 8 March 1904.

PARTICULARS	TO CEASE			TO COMMENCE		
	Date	Rate per week	per annum	Date	Rate per week	per annum
<p><i>Newtownmountkennedy S.O. to Newcastle S.O. R.P.</i></p> <p>Allowe for donkey-keep to Newtownmountkennedy S.O. to Newcastle S.O. R.P.</p>				19/8/Od.	5/-	

For the Postmaster's Information and guidance.

Surveyor,
10th March 1904

2 G.S. 191 (190) 200 4/2000

Allowance of five shillings per week to Greystones Postmaster for keeping donkeys at sorting offices, 8 March 1904

Our extensive postal history reference library and collection of postal ephemera, from early nineteenth century Post Office Reward Notices, to historic letters and specialised postal markings, has been donated to the National Library. The National Museum has accepted material that includes a large collection of Post Office date stamps, some from villages and townlands where post offices have closed. With each closure a little piece of Irish identity is lost for such date stamps can embody local topographical and linguistic history.

Trinity College Library is the beneficiary of an extensive collection of seditious pamphlets which were, on the instructions

of the Government, officially withdrawn from the mail in the troubled years before independence. First World War recruiting posters and a collection of maps, including some scarce Post Office mails circulation and telegraphic maps, also form part of the donation. The Royal Irish Academy, which holds the unique eighteenth century Bourke album of Irish revenue stamps, has also received interesting material including the printing plates used in producing the first set of Irish definitive stamps and Millicent Girling's original 1922 drawing for one of those designs.

Charles Bianconi's passport, art works by Robert Ballagh, civil war telegrams sent to Skibbereen, postal furniture made for Belturbet post office and a very fine Penfold pillar box are amongst items that have found permanent homes in museums in Tipperary, Dublin, Cork, Cavan and Galway. Architectural plans as well as fine portraits of Lees family members – Sir Edward Lees oversaw the building of the GPO – have been given to the Irish Architectural Archive.

A large collection of unadopted stamp designs, some by well-known Irish artistic figures, together with material relating to the stamp design and production process has been donated to NIVAL at NCAD. where it will be made available for public research.



Unused stamp design by Raymond McGrath marking creation of the Republic of Ireland, 1949

An Post retains several larger museum items - our Travelling Post Office carriage may be seen at the railway museum in Downpatrick - as well as the smallest archival items, our stamps, a few of which I exhibited earlier this year as part of our *Miniature Masterpieces* exhibition. While the dispersal of a unique historical collection is, inevitably, tinged with sadness for those who have formed it, there is also a positive realisation that much is being gained both in terms of long-term preservation and in the opportunities to bring the fascinating story of the Irish Post Office in Irish life to a much wider public.

For a taste of our collections, take a look at the following websites:

<https://repository.dri.ie/catalog/qz216n95h>

<http://centuryofstamps.ie/>

*Stephen Ferguson
Company Archivist & Museum Curator
31 October 2024*

Focus on Collections: John Tate's Charity Archive (Wicklow County Council)

Wicklow County Council Archives Service has recently launched the project *John Tate's Charity* based on a wonderful collection donated to the County Archives by the charity's board of trustees. John Tate's Charity was founded as a bequest in the will of John Tate in 1787, for the parishioners of Rathdrum, county Wicklow. Remarkably, the charity is still in operation today, assisting third-level students through interest-free loans. The archives project features a descriptive list of the John Tate's Charity collection, an exhibition, and online digital resources. Wicklow County Archives are grateful to the Heritage Council who supported the project through their Heritage Stewardship Fund 2024.

John Tate of Glenmalure died unmarried in 1787 at the age of 33. He was a member of the landed gentry and in his short life he extended his holdings to almost 3,000 acres in county Wicklow. In his will, he left his interest in 900 acres at Cullentragh near Rathdrum to form the basis of his charity, with the stipulation that parishioners of Rathdrum should benefit from its support. Reflecting contemporary ideas about poverty, Tate's will specified the lending of "small sums of money not exceeding £5 to any one person interest free to be paid in such a manner and at such times not exceeding 12 months....for the industrious poor of the said Parish of

Rathdrum.” The will also states that charitable donations (rather than loans) should only be distributed in exceptional circumstances, such as in cases of “sickness or some unforeseen misfortune or sudden emergency happening to any of the poor of the said parish”.

Apart from the provision of small loans, the collection also reveals other activities of the charity, including the support of a dispensary, a midwife and a school in Rathdrum, as well as a clothing club which ran from 1877 until 1979.

Tate’s Clothing Club was a savings club with a difference as savings were matched by the charity; if someone saved £5.00, they could get clothing worth £10.00, and they could nominate a local draper to supply the clothing.

A key condition of Tate’s will was that the charity would not discriminate based on religion, and over time, two of the five trustees would be the Rathdrum parish priest and the Church of Ireland rector. The charity’s minute books detail trustees, including Charles Stewart Parnell, who was its chairman from 1869 to 1878. Trustees were generally from well-established landed families, such as the Hayes family, who originally built

Avondale, the Actons of Kilmacurragh, the Comerfords and the Guinness family.

While the Tate collection is significant to the history of Rathdrum and County Wicklow, it also holds national historical importance as a notable example of the philanthropic activities of the landed gentry in Ireland during the 18th and 19th centuries. This social class is well represented in local authority archive collections, through their activities on Grand Juries and Boards of Guardians, and of course, their estate papers. However, the records of John Tate’s Charity also offer an insight into the lives and needs of the labouring and poorer classes and the perspectives and activities of charitable trusts.



Tate’s Charity Trustees at the opening of an exhibition to mark the donation of its archives with Catherine Wright (left) Archivist, Wicklow County Council

Wicklow County Archives collections include records of the county council and its predecessors, such as the Grand Juries, Boards of Guardians, and Town Commissioners. The County Archives also

holds the private papers and business archives of the families who administered, lived, and worked in the County Wicklow. For more information on Wicklow County Archives and the John Tate's Charity collection, see www.wicklow.ie. The full link is at:

<https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Arts-Heritage-Archives/Archives/Collections/Archives-Publications-Projects/-John-Tates-Charity-Archival-Collection>

Catherine Wright
Archivist, Wicklow County Council

Focus on Collections:

Irish Landed Estates Database Update

Thanks to funding from the Heritage Council under the Stewardship Grant Fund the Irish Landed Estates Database of sources has been further extended to include the counties of Longford and Westmeath, so that very soon the database will include all the counties of Connacht and Munster, three counties from Ulster - Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan and the two Leinster ones.

The work carried out under the Heritage Council funding was to create and upload bibliographical and descriptive data relating to the landed estates which existed in the counties of Longford and Westmeath, c.1700-c.1914. This resulted in the creation of entries relating to estates in these counties similar to those already visible on the Landed Estates Database (<https://landedestates.ie/>).

The database has a proven track record in the provision of research signposts to archaeologists, conservation architects, landscape gardeners, engineers and economists as well as academic and family historians and local communities. The addition of counties Longford and Westmeath will strengthen the information offered as it increases the number of counties for which such a research signpost is available to sixteen.

The activities undertaken by the two researchers in the compilation of entries involves the assessment of baseline data, for example *Griffiths Valuation*, Ordnance Survey first edition maps and Landowners' Surveys published in the 1870s. Entries for each estate are constructed and inputted into the Landed Estates Database along with additional data from supplementary sources, such as archival repository online catalogues, parliamentary papers and directories. The next step in this process involves the "Big House". Short descriptions are compiled, including the value of the house at the time of *Griffiths Valuation* and the sequence of owners. Locational data, such as the names of the civil parish, District Electoral Division and Poor Law Union, is given and Irish Grid references are assigned to allow plotting on the online map which features on the database home page. Finally, the information is cross checked with the National Built Heritage Service's *Buildings of Ireland* database for the existence of available images already in the public domain.

The work on Longford and Westmeath estates means that the database now contains entries for over 4,500 estates, 6,000 associated houses and over 4,000 associated families. Patterns of networks and spheres of influence among landed estate families were particularly apparent with the estates in these two midland counties. This was indicated by, in some cases, land ownership in two other provinces and/or in Dublin City. Strong evidence of marriage and familial influences also emerged.

The project was promoted during Heritage week with a talk entitled



“[Re]constructing the landed estates of Longford and Westmeath: the Irish Landed Estates Database”, given at Edgeworthstown Library.

Marie Boran
Brigid Clesham
University of Galway

Five-minute chat with an archivist: Gráinne Doran

Editor's note: Gráinne Doran trained at UCD Archives School and initially worked as Midlands Regional Archivist in Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Longford County Councils. She has been Wexford County Archivist since 2002. Gráinne has initiated and developed the county archives service to encompass all aspects of life in Wexford, with her trademark good humour and attention to detail.

What does your role entail?

As a local authority archivist, I have a dual responsibility for archives and records management. Wexford County Archive is the official repository for the archives and records of local government and its predecessor bodies – we also hold a range of local business, legal, maritime, educational, military and medical collections and records of local clubs and societies. Perhaps unusually for an archivist, I also curate an extensive collection of textiles, weaponry and artefacts which were transferred into my custodianship from the former Wexford County Museum following its closure in Enniscorthy in 2006.

I oversee an annual digitisation programme to enhance online access to some of our popularly requested collections and advise local heritage and community organisations in the management of their records. My role also entails liaising with other heritage venues across the county which have artefacts on loan from our holdings.

What is your typical workday like?

No two days are similar in the county archive, that's for sure! Researchers are facilitated in our reading room, enquiries from the public and council staff are ongoing, and deposits of archives are acquired and listed.

The workload has increased substantially in recent years, due in part to central government funding relating to the Decade of Centenaries and Creative Ireland. While such funding is invaluable towards cataloguing, conserving and digitising collections, it can impose challenges on a small team when meeting project deadlines.

In terms of records management, a twice weekly file retrieval/delivery service is offered to Wexford County Council and council sections are assisted in adhering to national retention schedules.

The most rewarding part of your job?

It's definitely meeting people – assisting researchers, encountering depositors, engaging with the public at various events. Having a great team behind me is very rewarding – I am fortunate to have two part-time clerical staff and two CES participants who are integral to the successful running of the service.

County Wexford, and particularly Enniscorthy holds a unique place in the history of the 1916 Rising as it was the last town in Ireland to surrender. I was involved in several key projects for the

centenary including a new 1916 exhibition – Wexford's Rising – and a sister travelling exhibition for schools, while also delivering talks and participating in local documentaries. To pay tribute to the men and women that participated in the 1916 Rising in County Wexford, a commemorative certificate was issued to their descendants at a large public event in Enniscorthy in April 2016, and a specially commissioned 1916 centenary pin was presented to first generation relatives. It was one of the highlights of the entire programme of events for the period and elicited very positive feedback.

Having researchers engage with our collections is integral, from post-primary students to academics to family history researchers. The county archive has had links with Georgia Southern University, Savannah since 2014 with undergraduate students and their supervisor visiting the county archive annually. The energy and enthusiasm of our American researchers exceeds that of all other users!

The most difficult part of your job?

Apportioning equal time to my responsibilities as archivist and records manager is the most challenging. Inevitably, the balance tips in favour of archive commitments due to the range of duties and projects. Daily targets are set but not always met due to an urgent query issuing from a council department or a call-out to salvage vulnerable archives, or

unscheduled callers to the county archive bearing detailed research enquiries.



Panel from Wexford County Archives' Exhibition about Cumann na mBan, 2016

The most creative aspect of your job?

One of my first priorities on appointment to Wexford was to raise the profile of the fledgling archives service. A booklet, *Out, damned spot!* and an accompanying brochure, *Preserving your family archives* were published in 2002 and circulated at archives workshops across the county. The significant time invested paid dividends in publicity and resulted in the deposit of several major collections.

I enjoy laying out content and visuals for exhibitions and in arranging displays of archives in venues across the county. To commemorate the centenary of the War of Independence in County Wexford, I commissioned memory boxes for use in primary schools containing replica documents, photographs and artefacts from our collections. I have also organised reminiscence projects in daycare centres and hospitals during the annual Bealtaine festival.

Striking visual displays from the Wexford Festival Opera archive we hold are showcased each year during the opera festival, while Wexford's hosting of the Fleadh Cheol this year provided the opportunity to showcase a historic set of Uilleann pipes (made in 1844) from our holdings which belonged to master piper, Tommy Moore.

Your three favourite collections?

It won't come as a surprise that our 1916 holdings are a firm favourite and have been exploited in many ways for public

engagement. As a legacy project for the end of the Decade of Centenaries in 2023, the archives service launched a publication – *Wexford County Archive: 25 objects from the Irish Revolution, 1916-23* to showcase a selection of these unique and rare items.

Another favourite collection relates to Gorey poor law union, which includes records of boarded-out children, bonds for the appointment of various workhouse staff and contract documents for the supply of foodstuffs and provisions (1849-62) which are an invaluable aid for family history.

Promoting the role of County Wexford's women in various events continues to be a passion of mine – particularly those women from history who would not be documented in mainstream sources, e.g. many of the rank-and-file Cumann na mBan members in the 1916-23 period. I am currently finalising content for an exhibition on female representation in local elections in County Wexford, 1899-2024 for this year's 125th anniversary of local government in Ireland.

Your favourite place in county Wexford?

By far my favourite place in county Wexford is Curracloe beach – it is a fantastic location at any time of year, and on a summer's day, looking out across the blue water, one could be forgiven for mistaking it for the Mediterranean Sea. After a walk, run or some yoga practice on the beach, the worries and the stresses of

daily life evaporate – recommended therapy for an addled archivist!

Archivists tend to be quirky people – is there anything unusual in the way you do your job?

I am well known for the habit of talking out loud to myself and having many such conversations daily in the office – my long-suffering colleagues are oblivious to such outbursts at this stage!

And a rather unusual addition to our archives team – but nonetheless an indispensable one – is our unofficial canine head of security and pest control, Zack, who ensures that the archives team is kept motivated and happy!

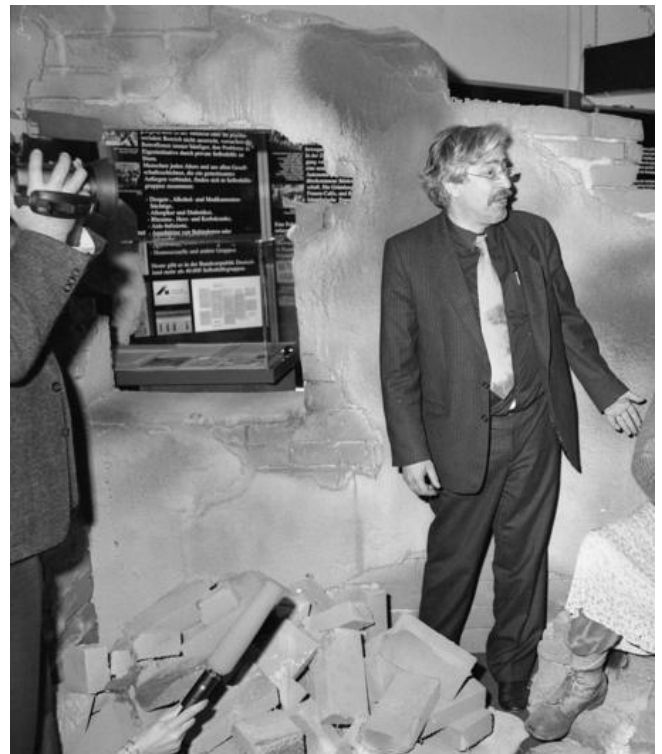
Heroes of Irish Archives: Professor Dr Friedrich Peter Kahlenberg

Fritz Kahlenberg was born on 29 October 1935 in Mainz. He suffered a difficult childhood, based as he was in the French Zone at the end of the war. Regrettably his father never returned from the Russian Front. After leaving school he studied history, philosophy, literature, and protestant theology from 1956 until 1962. He was awarded a doctorate from the University of Mainz in 1963 for his thesis on the Electorate of Mainz.

Deciding against a teaching career he undertook initial archival training in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz in 1962 and attended the archives school in Marburg from 1962 until 1964 graduating through

the state examination for the higher archival profession. He began his archival career in the Bundesarchiv in 1964, progressing through the ranks in 1966 and 1969. In 1971 he became a departmental director, in 1974 principal departmental director for non-state records and in 1985 head of the Department of Policy Issues and deputy to the President of the Bundesarchiv. He also had responsibility for the Bundesarchiv film collection held on the opposite side of the Rhine at Ehrenbreitstein. In this capacity he also attended the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde in Wiesbaden evaluating older restricted films which might be derestricted and available for public viewing in a cinema. Not all films were so derestricted. He was also responsible for the Haus der Deutschen Geschichte in the Aussenstelle Rastatt – Memorial to the Freedom Movements in German History – that hosted exhibitions up until 1989.

Kahlenberg was President of the Bundesarchiv from June 1989 until October 1999. On his retirement (one year early) he was presented with a Festschrift edited by many colleagues – Klaus Oldenhage, Hermann Schreyer, Wolfram Werner – *Archiv und Geschichte: Festschrift für Friedrich P. Kahlenberg* (Schriften des Bundesarchivs, Band 57, 2000) covering a staggering 988 pages. His unlisted private papers are held by the Bundesarchiv covering the years 1990-9 (accession N 1540).



*February 1989:
Professor Friedrich Kahlenberg
at the opening of an exhibition in Bonn
to mark the 40th anniversary of the
Federal Republic of Germany
(Little did anyone suspect what
the rest of 1989 would bring!)*

Photo: Courtesy Bundesarchiv Deutschland

He was a lecturer in the University of Mannheim from 1967 onwards on sources (Quellenkunde und Verwaltungs Lehre) where, since 1973, he was Honorary Professor of Administrative Sciences and Modern Source Studies. From 1976-85 he was guest lecturer at the University of Television and Film HFF in Munich.

Kahlenberg was also external examiner for the Diploma in Archival Studies in U.C.D. from 1973-8 during which period he contributed many articles to the *Irish Archives Bulletin*. As this aspect of his career and his association with U.C.D. has

been covered admirably by Dr Peter Crooks in *Irish Archives* for 2022 it will not be repeated here. Apart from subsequent visits to friends in Ireland his final visit was in 1999 to address the Society of Archivists Annual Conference which was held in Dublin when he provided the Closing Address, "Crossing the divide – the German experience: towards the millennium". The year before he had attended "Cyber, hyper or resolutely Jurassic? Archivists and the millennium" international symposium in U.C.D. where one of the speakers, Dr Deborah Jenkins, was a graduate of the Archives Department when he was external examiner.

The move of part of the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz to Berlin-Lichterfelde in the 1990s did not mean that Kahlenberg moved there as well. As not all Divisions moved to Berlin there were still many sections of the Bundesarchiv throughout Germany but especially in the western part of the country.



*Bundesarchiv Deutschland:
New purpose-built repository in Berlin*

The amalgamation of the D.D.R. archival repositories into the Bundesarchiv is a story for another day as is the building of a new purpose-built repository in Berlin. Kahlenberg had to oversee both. His previous experience had been in the development of the Zwischenarchiv (interim repository) in Bad Godesberg and later St Augustin-Hangelar and, no doubt, with the new purpose built repository for the Bundesarchiv in 1986. At his retirement party in November 1999 seven speeches were made in his honour! One colleague spoke of him being permanently weighted down with rucksack and heavy briefcase. 836 colleagues from all parts of the Bundesarchiv attended.

Having given up his house at Weimarerstrasse on the outskirts of Koblenz near to the Mosel, he and his family moved into a defunct village guesthouse in Oppenheim, in the mountains behind Boppard. Boasting a terrace overlooking the main street and complete with cider press and a stream running through the garden (for keeping white wine cool) it was idyllic and as far away from the world of archives as was imaginable. Unsurprisingly the house was called Schöneckermühle (the beautiful corner mill). In his response to the speeches made at his retirement Kahlenberg regretted the many times he was away from his wife and children, all the funerals he had missed. He promised to keep Sunday holy from then on! Yet he set himself a retirement project – Studies of the Federal Cultural Policy during the Adenauer Era – but made slow progress. Another project was work on the State

Parliament of Rheinland-Pfalz. Work on his own family's archives also kept him busy. Meeting up with retired colleagues was another pleasant duty. An active retirement indeed!

On sunny Friday evenings, in a sweltering summer, a visit to a nearby hostelry was required. The reason – it was provided with barrels of Guinness! More serious personal pursuits included his friendships with Edgar Reitz (director of the *Heimat* films, 1984-) and Günter Grass (awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1999). Kahlenberg was an inveterate pipe smoker (as burned index fingers testified) and a drinker of copious cups of black coffee. The dropping of the pipe was not unknown. On special days away from the Bundesarchiv he might indulge in a glass of weisswein sprudl (white wine with mineral/soda water). Above all, he enjoyed Guinness, and we sometimes repaired to the Alter Josef pub near to the Bundesarchiv after work.

Before proceeding to the Bundesarchiv in 1975 this contributor had taken the precaution of purchasing a copy of Friedrich P. Kahlenberg, *Deutsche Archive in West und Ost: Zur Entwicklung des staatlichen Archivwesens seit 1945*, (Mannheimer Schriften zur Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 4.) Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1972. pp. 153. Although the author was subsequently happy to sign my copy, he felt that I had got a bad buy! He never deviated from the use of a fountain pen and only ever used black ink!

Kahlenberg was funny, energetic, engaging, argumentative and endlessly enquiring. Nothing could be taken for granted. There was nothing he liked more than a good discussion – making sure to prise information or an argument out of a reluctant contributor. Above all he was generous – in time and commitment – and he gave of both freely. His friendships endured. He was held in great affection. Each year cards, letters, invitations, publications would arrive on my desk, a constant stream of communications wending their way from Koblenz to Dublin. In return this contributor would send him the latest issue of the Irish Society for Archives *Journal* in which he took great pleasure.

This is a personal recollection. It is neither an obituary nor a eulogy. It is as personal as it is heart-felt – a tribute to a true colleague and friend. In this contributor's remembrance of Kahlenberg what will be remembered was his enthusiasm, his love of paper records and of film, his commitment to his profession and to his colleagues. He was justly proud of his family and of the attainments of his children (one son, alas, predeceased him).

It was a privilege to have known him. He is mourned by family, colleagues and friends. May he rest in peace

Aideen M. Ireland
Former President
Archives and Records Association
Great Britain and Ireland

Reaching out: Open Days at the Irish Architectural Archive

Collecting archives, and cataloguing them, is ultimately only worthwhile if people make use of those archives. For this to happen, those people have to know that the archives exist. Even more basically, they also have to know of the existence of the institution which holds them.

Tools in the Irish Architectural Archive's arsenal to spread the word about itself and its holdings include an active exhibitions programme (with over eighty exhibitions presented since 2005), publications, lectures and symposia, a monthly E-newsletter, a website and social media activity. Highly effective is participation in broader campaigns such as the ARAI's *Explore Your Archive* or the *Dublin Festival of History* organised by Dublin City Libraries. Also critical, for the IAA at any rate, are 'open' events. Three in particular recur annually and each is invaluable in bringing the IAA and its collections to new audiences.



*Tour group in the IAA Reading Room
(Courtesy Irish Architectural Archive)*

Delivered by the Heritage Council, *Heritage Week*, as its tagline states, 'celebrates Ireland's cultural, built and natural heritage'. This obviously includes archives, and many archival institutions participate each year. The IAA is no exception. Over the years our Heritage Week offerings have ranged from lecture series to pop-up exhibitions. More recently, we have been providing daily guided tours of 45 Merrion Square. With an average of ten participants and lasting forty-five minutes to one hour, our tours are informal and conversational in nature. They cover the history of 45 Merrion Square, backed up with information on the IAA itself and the material that it holds.

Culture Night was introduced to Dublin in 2006 by Temple Bar Cultural Trust and Dublin City Council. It is now a nationwide event under the auspices of the Arts Council. The IAA has been participating since 2010. Up to 2019 we stayed open from 5pm to midnight. More recently we have been closing at 10pm (primarily due to very low visitor numbers between 10pm and midnight). Over the course of the evening, staff provide guided tours of the building every half-hour or so. Visitors can also explore the building and our exhibitions (there is always at least one exhibition in place for *Culture Night*) on their own and at their own pace. The smallest number of visitors we have had on any *Culture Night* was 450 and on one extraordinary occasion in 2016 we counted over 4,500 people through the

doors. Over the past three years we seem to have settled into an average of about 500 visitors per *Culture Night*, meaning the building is bustling for the whole evening but never overwhelmed.



*Open House visitors on the main stairs of
45 Merrion Square*

As an architecture festival, it might be expected that the target audience for *Open House* knows about the IAA, and will have visited for exhibitions or other events, if not to use the reading room. However, we are constantly surprised by the numbers who come (an average of 250 each Saturday we open) and by how many of

them tell us they have never been to the IAA before or (worse!) had never heard of us until they saw us in the programme. But this is really the point of the exercise. Each open event brings in an entirely new audience, one that is unfamiliar with the IAA but eager to learn more. Each event has a large scale, funded and professionally delivered media campaign which in turn ensures a reach far beyond just the numbers through the doors. And the people who do come are engaged and eager, grateful for the opportunity to glimpse behind the scenes and fascinated by what we have to offer. Indeed, many of our most regular users started on their IAA journey in this way.

The IAA has a staff of five and, aside from Heritage Week tours, all of us are on duty for at least part of each open day. This means staff working outside normal hours or on weekends. So, the commitment is not negligible. That said, our experience with these events would inspire us to encourage any archives to get involved.

*Colum O’Riordan,
Director, Irish Architectural Archive*

Reaching Out: Exhibition: Fifty years of Nursing and Midwifery at the RCSI

On 30 October 2024 the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland’s Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery celebrated its 50th anniversary in their historic building at 123 St Stephen’s Green. The Heritage Collections team which comprises Susan Leyden (Archivist), Jessica Handy (Digital Archivist), Ronan Kelly (Outreach and

Engagement Officer), Carol Creavin (Library Assistant) and Erin McRae (Project Cataloguing Archivist) planned a number of activities to support the Faculty's commemorations and shine a spotlight on their historic archives. These activities included appraising and cataloguing the collection which was undertaken by Erin, digitization of a selection of materials from the collection which are currently being uploaded to the Digital Heritage Collections platform and was led by Jess (which can be accessed [here](#)); the recording of oral histories from members of the Faculty, led by Ronan; and an exhibition to display content from the Faculty's collection, led by Susan, Carol and Erin. The collection is a unique resource as it documents key developments in nursing and midwifery education in Ireland which goes beyond the Faculty's 50 years thanks to very dedicated nurse tutors and teachers, particularly its Founding Dean Mary Frances Crowley who undertook the compilation of histories of various hospitals and was involved with various nursing institutions such as the Dublin Metropolitan Technical School for Nurses and the Irish Guild of Catholic Nurses. The collection also comprises records relating to the National Florence Nightingale Committee of Ireland and the Queen's Institute of District Nursing in Ireland as well as the Lady Dudley Scheme for District Nursing.



*Part of RCSI Exhibition celebrating
50th anniversary of its
Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery, 1974-2024
© Maxwell Photography*

The collection also holds records relating to the Founder Dean, Mary Frances Crowley and her time as Matron of the Hôpital irlandais de Saint-Lô in Normandy following the Second World War. The Heritage Collections team also worked with an external media company to create a video celebrating the life and legacy of Dean Crowley. The project culminated in a celebratory event hosted by the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery where the exhibition could be viewed, and remarks were given by Erin on her work cataloguing the collection. The video can be viewed on the RCSI Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery's YouTube [here](#) and the collection will soon be made accessible via the RCSI Heritage Collections catalogue online.

*Erin McRae
Project Cataloguing Archivist
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland*

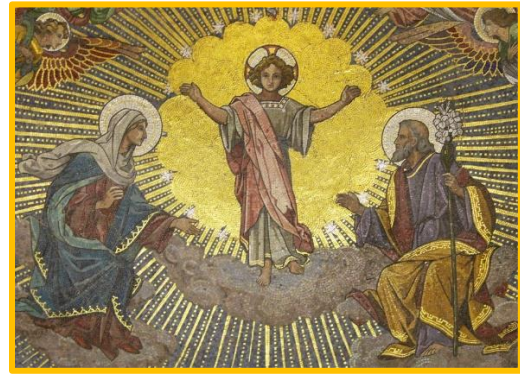
Reaching Out: Celebrating a Centenary The Chapel of the Holy Family, Cabra

The archives of the Cabra Dominican Sisters are rich and varied, with historic records dating back to the seventeenth century when a community of Dominican nuns was first established in Galway. These nuns dedicated their small chapel to the Holy Family, and this tradition of dedication was continued and carried forth by a small band of Dominican women who left Galway to escape religious persecution, forming a new foundation in Dublin in 1717. These Dominican nuns eventually settled in Cabra in 1819 and duly consecrated their chapel to the Holy Family in 1924.

This year, the archives department of the Dominican Sisters decided to celebrate the centenary of the consecration of the Chapel of the Holy Family in Cabra. This was informed by a comprehensive collection of archival material and took the form of guided tours during Heritage Week (17-25 August), a special mass on 22 October – the traditional Feast of the Consecration of the Chapel, and the creation of an online exhibition.

As the centre of religious life in Cabra Convent, the chapel is well represented in the archive; records including photographs, architectural drawings, lesson plans, artwork and other writings provided an ideal foundation for tour information. Though first built in 1851, major additions and extensions in the early twentieth century significantly altered the status of the church. Upon the

installation of a new high altar in 1924, the Dominican Sisters asked Edward Byrne, Archbishop of Dublin, to consecrate it. The archbishop consecrated the entire chapel instead, and the consecration ceremony took place on 4 August 1924.



The Holy Family, executed in mosaic by Oppenheimer in 1905

In August 2024, the chapel opened for Heritage Week tours. Visitors included past pupils and former staff members of the schools founded by the Sisters in Cabra, local people and many friends and members of the Dominican Order. Tours began outside and took in the church façade, remodelled in the Romanesque style in 1905, before visitors were ushered inside to learn about the history of the building and view its striking interior – a blend of Byzantine and Romanesque design, with Celtic elements added throughout. Highlights of the tour included the gilded Stations of the Cross, painted on copper by Belgian firm Beyaert of Bruges in 1905. The ornate Sanctuary, decorated in rich mosaic, was an area much-admired by attendees.

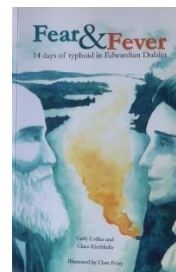


Chapel of the Holy Family, Cabra, 1909: after it had been extended and its façade remodelled in a Romanesque style (Cabra Dominican Archives)

Tours included anecdotal stories about the history of the building which can count both Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis among its many visitors. In keeping with tradition, a special Mass celebrated by Fr John Harris OP, Prior Provincial of Ireland, was followed by afternoon tea, with archival material and artefacts relating to the chapel on display. Keen to add new records to the chapel sub-series within the archives, each visitor was invited to sign a guest book, and photographs were taken throughout the day.

In conjunction with the commemoration events, a digital exhibition was developed to facilitate online access for members of the public and for the many Cabra Dominican Sisters living in Latin America, South Africa and the USA. See: <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/aURir1fxqsAGVnEG?ref=Link>

Mary O'Byrne, David Gunning, and Ruth Flynn, Cabra Dominican Archives



Published in 2024

Fear and Fever:

14 days of typhoid in Edwardian Dublin

A graphic novel by Carly Collier and

Claas Kirchelle

Illustrated by Clare Foley

**Dublin City Library & Archive (2024)30 pp
ISBN 978-1-8384635-8-8**

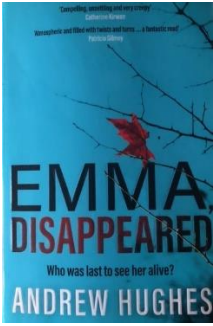
In 2010, the *British Journal of Medicine* noted with approval the rise of 'graphic medicine'. The term had been coined a few years earlier by Ian Williams (a practising GP and comic-book artist) to denote that 'intersection between the medium of comics and the discourse of healthcare.' Key texts for the *BMJ* authors were *Cancer Vixen* by Marisa Acocella Marchetto and *Mom's Cancer* by Brian Fies

(both 2006). Soon after, one could add Williams' own debut graphic novel, *The Bad Doctor* (2014), as something like an instant classic in the field. Since that time, graphic medicine has been on the rise in Ireland too – see, for example, *The Breakfast Club* (2019), a graphic novelette on diabetes in pregnancy produced by the Rotunda Hospital, or the major 3-day conference on the subject hosted this past summer by the Technological University of the Shannon. A new publication, *Fear & Fever: 14 Days of Typhoid in Edwardian Dublin* (2024), written by academics Carly Collier and Claas Kirchhelle, and illustrated by Clare Foley, is a terrific homegrown contribution to the genre. Despite its brevity – it runs to just 30 pages – every panel packs a punch to tell a compelling story about the early days of public health medicine in Ireland.

Narratively, the authors employ two canny devices: first, the focus on a tight timeline, which even as it compresses information also implies myriad similar stories (not least, by extension, our own the Covid-19 pandemic). And second, in their choice of two lead characters: the real-life Medical Superintendent Officer of Health for the City of Dublin, Sir Charles Cameron (the Tony Holohan of the day); and the fictional nursemaid, Teresa Byrne (a composite figure based on various real-world sources). As the fortnight unfolds, Cameron's data-science detective-work (plus his clashes with adversaries) are interweaved with the plight of Byrne and her downwardly mobile family. Three pages of discursive Endnotes amply attest to the historical veracity of every element.

The risk in a text like this is of creating something a little too fibrously didactic – yet *Fear & Fever* stays on the right side of that line, thanks to the skill of the artist, Clare Foley. Her lightly sketched characters carry the text-heavy narrative with economy and charm, creating a flow that matches the disease's headlong spread. Flowing too is Foley's essentially two-tone watercolour palette: a cool symphony of teals and turquoises, lit up very effectively by sulphurous ochres to denote typhoid's traces, both literal (contaminated people and things) and metaphorical (the spreading anxiety). In places, the narrative is even more powerful when pictures alone do the talking (such as the moment Teresa's hair is cropped). When it comes to graphic novels, many projects live or die on the appeal – necessarily subjective – of the artwork, and this reader would now happily seek out any story that Foley illustrated (the recognizable Dublin cityscape is particularly special). The fact that the art is united here with scrupulous historical detail makes this book – developed as part of a wider research project (www.typhoidland.org) – entirely successful in its own right. Its publisher, Dublin City Library & Archive (a graphic novel first for an archives service in Ireland?) should be congratulated. When's the next one?

Dr Ronan P. Kelly
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland Library



Published in 2024
Emma, Disappeared
A novel by Andrew Hughes

Hachette Books Ireland (2024)
327pp ISBN: 978-1-3997309-3-8

There is no doubt that the crime novel has replaced cowboy stories as the most popular choice of books over the past sixty years – and this obsession shows no sign of abating. In a confusing and uncertain world, readers seem to seek reassurance from the crime novel's tropes – particularly when all loose ends have been drawn together and the malefactors get what's coming to them! While many crime novels are simply potboilers, written to a standard format, some authors have appropriated the genre as a means of exploring issues which are of interest to them. PD James looked at the role of religion in the modern world through her Adam Dalgleish works; Alexander McCall Smith makes the case for the primacy of goodness in his Botswana novels - while Nita Prose sets out the unlikely but true operation of the class system in the United States through her recent novel *The Maid*. Even Agatha Christie produced a chilling description of eternal damnation in *Endless Night*.

The Irish archivist-cum-author Andrew Hughes has previously written two novels in the crime genre. *The Convictions of John Delahunt* (2020) is true crime, based on events which happened in 1841, while *The Coroner's Daughter* (2016) is a work of fiction which was celebrated as the choice for One Dublin, One Book in 2023. Now he has adapted this genre to explore amorality in 21st century Dublin, in his third novel *Emma, Disappeared*. In this, his first contemporary work of fiction, Hughes focuses on a society where the worst possible occurrence is being late for work – while taking drugs, infidelity and even murder are of little concern to the perpetrators. The only cause worth fighting for is feminism – which was also the theme of *The Coroner's Daughter*. Here his protagonist is an archivist working as a cataloguer of Victorian death photographs in the National Library of Ireland. In one of a number of in-jokes, this archivist is named James Lyster (Thomas Lyster was the director of the National Library from 1895 until he retired in 1920.) Eagle-eyed readers may spot more!

The author takes James Lyster on walking expeditions in Dublin city centre and on the north side, delineating the capital as a series of villages masquerading as a metropolis. He deftly and in a few words conveys the grey reality of winter in Dublin, having drinks in Neary's, chilly walks in the Botanic Gardens and the muggy atmosphere of an evening in Fagan's. His set-pieces work well – a riot

outside Leinster House, a cringing family birthday party, a demolition crew arriving to strip a Georgian mansion. His characters come to life, and he is especially good at describing the stubborn infrangibility and searing honesty of teenagers. Trinity College Dublin is effectively another character in the book – something which seems to be an essential leitmotif for young novelists today. It would be welcome to read a novel sometime about the bright positivity of Dublin City University or the phoenix that is the Technological University at Grangegorman.

Hughes demonstrates a sure grasp of the fundamentals of the whodunnit. His carefully plotted sequence of events leads the reader confidently to a certain conclusion – which is later upended with equal credibility. There are other twists which surprise at first but then make perfect sense. And the unusual but effective ending offers a new way of ensuring that crime doesn't pay!

Dr Mary Clark
Honorary Editor, ISA Newsletter

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