

REPORT 1999

ACTIVITIES

AN EXCEPTIONAL YEAR

The year 1999 was exceptional in the development of the Library. Most of the energies of the staff were devoted to preparation for the move to Dublin Castle, which was scheduled to take place in the autumn. Exhibitions were maintained at Shrewsbury Rd. until July 2nd when a garden party marked the final closure to the public of the Shrewsbury Rd. site. It was attended by almost three hundred guests. Thereafter, with the closure, staff efforts focused on the principal task of preparation for the move. Extensive stock checks were made, a contractor for the move was appointed (Messrs. Beverly Smyth), and arrangements for the packing put in hand. At the same time, the tempo of dealing with the designers' needs for briefing materials and exhibition details intensified. From mid-summer, dealing with orders for photographs was curtailed as the materials were gradually packed ready for shipment. A programme of photography of the collection continued together with the digitisation of the images produced. The Library now has a bank of almost 1500 high-quality images in digital format capable of being used for a variety of purposes and at a number of resolutions.

While the Clock Tower Building was formally handed over to the Library on 4 October, the Reference Library had begun to move there in July. During June and July the Chinese ceiling and cabinets were moved to the Clock Tower Building by the firm, St. Blaise, for re-assembly. In autumn, the craftsmen of Furniture Branch, OPW, moved the Hicks bookcases from the Garden Library to the new Reference Library and Board Room. These activities caused significant disruption at Shrewsbury Rd. and required in some instances that collections' material be relocated within the complex before packing for the move. Ms. Susan Corr gave advice and assistance on packing. The efforts of the staff were supplemented in November by Mr. Adrian Kennedy (Consultant Conservator) and by Mr. Finbar Kelly and Mr. Garry Keleghan, art handlers. While most of the collection was rehoused rapidly in its allocated space the work of placing some material, especially that requiring fitted padding, continued for many weeks. The move of the collection was completed on 10 December. Moving furniture and other materials (including large numbers of unsold publications) was also a considerable task. The work of moving the collections was greatly facilitated by a generous loan by the National Museum of re-usable packing crates.

The Library donated surplus display equipment to the National Maritime Museum and lent some of its original showcases to Fingal County Council for regional museum exhibitions.

The task of moving the collections while, at the same time preparing for new displays, was very demanding. The staff of the Library made a remarkable effort to achieve what was required. In

December, the Trustees held a dinner to thank them for their exceptional work over the period of the move.

The Library premises, after extensive preparatory work, were sold by public auction on 10 November and the sale finally closed on 20 December. The price realised – at £7.2 million was exceptional and more than covered the designated budget of £6 million for the fit-out of the Clock Tower Building. Preparations for the sale were onerous and time-consuming. The Library was advised on the sale by its solicitors, Messrs McCann FitzGerald. The selling agents were Messrs. Sherry FitzGerald. The sale received extensive coverage in the national news media.

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition activity was limited by the closure of Shrewsbury Rd. in mid-year. The standing exhibition “A Gift to the People” continued in the main gallery with regular substitutions of new material until July. The display of Islamic manuscripts “Adorning the Word of God and Man” was shown until spring. The final exhibition mounted was “The End is Near” a survey of the Apocalypse drawing on the papyrus ms *Revelation*, the Durer and printed book collections. Visitors to the exhibitions numbered some 5000. While there was a noticeable increase in visitors wishing to see the Library before it closed, the effect of confusion over the location of the Library occasioned by delays in the development of the Clock Tower Building, noticed during 1998, clearly affected numbers adversely. In June *The Vincent Browne Show* devoted an entire programme to the Library – the Director, Dr. Pollard and Professor Freyne took part.

The Library also announced in December its planned showing of the manuscript of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* in an exhibition organised by the Rosenbach Museum and Library, Philadelphia. The announcement was widely covered in the media. The launch took place, by kind permission, at the James Joyce Centre in North Great George’s St. The Library is very grateful to the Trustees and Management of the Centre.

STAFFING, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

Staffing:

During the course of 1999 sanction was obtained to expand the staff of the library. Approval was secured for the appointment of a permanent Reference Librarian, Education Officer, Operations Manager, two assistants in the administration, a Shop Manager (contract post), six new members of the Attendant Staff and a Library Assistant post were agreed for appointment when the proposed Reference Library opens to the readers. In addition regrading of the Technical Manager post and the creation of promotion posts for Attendants (one Head and two Senior positions) were sanctioned. Interviews in August led to the appointment of Mr. John Coleman as Operations Manager, and in interviews from October to December, the following were also appointed – Ms. Celine Ward, Reference Librarian, Ms. Jennifer Siung, Education Officer, Ms. Sheila Kulkarni and Ms. Sinead Ward, Administrative Assistants, Ms. Geraldine Healy, Shop Manager. Mr. Tony Hutchings was promoted to Head Attendant, Mr. Albert Mason and Mr. Kevin Hackett were appointed Senior Attendants. One new Attendant, Mr. Val Kavanagh, was appointed in August. Interviews for new Attendants were held in December, appointments to be made in January 2000. The increase in the staff of the Library represents a remarkable step forward in the development of the institution and the support of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands was essential to bringing this about.

In order to complete the tasks necessary for the move of the Library, the help of expert contract staff was essential – the consultancy help has been described. Ms. Catherine Yvard, Mr. Kevin McLoughlin, Ms. Charlotte Schriwer, Ms. Sheila Kulkarni, Ms. Sinead Ward, Ms. Catherine Giltrap, Ms. Veronica Ryan performed a range of tasks – packing, stock-checking, control of shipping documents, research for exhibitions, rehousing of the collections. Without their assistance, the task would have been impossible.

Management:

The tasks of managing the transfer of the collections, sale of the property, recruitment of new staff, promotion and representation of the Library were formidable in 1999. However, the work of planning the next phase of the Library's development continued and a new Strategic Plan was the subject of consultation in preparation for publication in 2000. The addition from September onwards of new administrative staff eased the burden considerably and the willing participation of members of the Board of Trustees in the recruitment process greatly helped also. A major work load was generated by the sale of the property and by the general increase in the volume of business. Attendance at meetings to manage the process of the development, design meetings, and personnel and related negotiations with the Trade Union required the bulk of the Director's time and attention. The Operations Manager supervised the move of the offices. Mr. Bagley, Technical Manager assisted by Mr. Stephen Farrell, managed the task of moving the computer equipment of the Library and maintaining services on two sites. They also managed a project to modernise the database which reached an advanced stage of development by Autumn but the completion of which was then by agreement deferred until after the move. Designing computer systems for the new building, developing telecommunications, preparing staff to work with the Building Management System, liaison with the engineering consultants on security, climate-control, visitor monitoring all fell to their lot. Their contribution to the development was significant.

Ms. Healy – appointed in December – set herself the task of developing a shop in the new building in time for the opening in February 2000.

Finance:

The annual grant-in-aid for the Library was £660,000 for 1999. Of this £47,000 was specifically designated for capital works on the new building. The grant represented a significant advance on the previous year and it was further supplemented at the year's end by a special capital grant of £120,000 for furniture and equipment for the Library. The generous response of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands to the Library's needs continues a trend of increasing support which had been underway for a number of years. The closure of the Library and the restricted ability to meet photographic requests severely constrained efforts to maximise income. Every effort was made to practice economy. However, the needs of the move – especially the safety of the collections – required exceptional expenditure in the autumn-early winter period and heavy cost-overruns were experienced. Exceptional items of capital expenditure were also required to provide for equipment at the castle not budgeted for in the fit-out. In addition to the shop, arrangements were made to develop revenue-earning activities in the new home and a competition for the restaurant franchise was advertised. Professional fund-raising advice was taken and a number of proposals made to potential sponsors and foundations.

It is too early to measure the likely success of these and the option of further expert support is being considered. In the long-term, the Library is considering the establishment of a development office.

Ms. Vera Greif is the Finance Manager and in the new administrative structure, she also takes responsibility for marketing. The volume of accountancy work greatly increased in 1999 and may be

expected to increase further in the year 2000 when the Library reopens. Summary accounts certified by the Auditors, Messrs. Price Waterhouse Coopers, are appended to this report.

Conservation and Documentation

Conservation:

During the year a large number of miniatures, prints and drawings were remounted on the advice of Ms. Corr with the assistance of Mr. Albert Mason. In addition over 2000 boxes were made for the collections by a team consisting of Mr. Mason, Mr. Kevin Hackett, and Mr. John Madden. The importance of this work for the long-term care of the collection cannot be too highly emphasised. The Library is now self-sufficient in equipment and skills for mounting and boxing the collections. It lacks a fulltime conservator and in addition to Ms. Corr's consultancy work, it must continue to out-source work. There is more than sufficient work for a paper conservator in-house. During the year Mr. Adrian Kennedy undertook conservation of decorative arts objects, Ms. Clíodhna Devitt, textiles, and Ms. Jenny Slevin, lacquer objects. OPW Furniture Branch craftsmen expertly carried out conservation on Library furniture much of which will be on display from February 2000. In preparation for opening the new Library the level of conservation activity has been unprecedented and has greatly exceeded the capacity of the current income of the library to support.

Documentation:

During the year substantial additions were made to inventory entries, the listing on computer of the printed book collection was completed in outline form. The process of cataloguing all the 35 mm transparencies was completed and progress was made on cataloguing the older and new large format negatives and transparencies. Mr. James Curran made a substantial number of microfilms. The work of modernising the database described above under *Management* was pursued. The archive files were listed on computer, packed (in 300 boxes) and shipped to Dublin Castle. The packing process, for the archives and the collections, required the making of duplicate packing lists for each crate which were then checked out of Shrewsbury Rd. and in to Dublin Castle. The lists provide an important baseline stock-check of the collection and have been added to the archives.

STAFF ACTIVITIES

The Director continued, in addition to his regular duties, to serve on the Heritage Council for which he chaired its Museums Committee and served on a number of working parties. He also served until December 1999 as a member of the Interim Humanities and Social Sciences Research Council and on the Library Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London. He was elected a Member of Council of the Royal Irish Academy and of the Discovery Programme. In April 1999, he delivered a paper to the annual conference of the American Association of Museums on the Dublin Castle development. He also served on the Council of National Cultural Institutions. His *Early Irish communion Vessels* was published during the year by Town House. He also published a number of articles on archaeological topics.

Mr. Horton Most of his time was devoted to work relating to the exhibition design, participation in AV programme production, and the movement and storage of the collections. In June 1999, he mounted the exhibition "The end is near" and managed external loans to exhibitions in TCD, Padua and Ghent. In

December a Masters degree was conferred on Mr. Horton by the University of London. He welcomed and spoke to a number of visiting specialist groups.

Dr. Pollard: delivered a number of lectures during the year, including “Chester Beatty and his Japanese collections” (at the annual dinner of the Japanese Studies Committee of Trinity College), “Japanese printing” (at the National Gallery of Ireland), “Miyagawa Kozan and the Japanese Ceramics of the Meiji Period” to the Symposium on Meiji Period Decorative Arts, Prague. She was selected as a participant in the forthcoming workshop on Early Japanese Illustrated Books at the Freer and Sackler Gallery. She also taught a course in the Japanese Studies Programme in Trinity College. However, the bulk of her time was devoted to preparing the collections for the move, supervising transport, briefing the designers and participating in the production of audio-visual programmes including scripting the Life of Buddha and actively participating in the drafting of the new strategic plan for the Library. Her paper ‘Parody in the Floating World: *Mitate-e* in the Chester Beatty Library’, appeared in *Interpretation of Texts, Sacred and Secular* (edited by Pierre Buhler and Tibor Fabiny), Proceedings of the International Conference, organized by Centre for Hermeneutical Research, Budapest and The Institut für Hermeneutik und Religionsphilosophie, University of Zurich

Dr. Wright: main tasks for the year were the continued maintenance of the permanent galleries at the Shrewsbury Road site until the closing of the Library, the planning of the new exhibition galleries for Dublin Castle, and the moving of the collection in late autumn. The planning of the new exhibitions included the making of two videos: *The Making of an Islamic Manuscript* and *The Hajj, The Pilgrimage to Mecca*. At the Shrewsbury Road site, *Adorning the Words of Man and God*, a temporary exhibition of illuminated Islamic manuscripts, ended on 29 May 1999. A full-colour, three-quarter-page announcement of the exhibition appeared in the Spring 1999 issue of the journal, *Oriental Art*. On 24 April, Dr. Edmund Herzig of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at Manchester University visited the Library and presented the lecture, *Turbans and Typography: Armenian Merchants and Cultural Exchange in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, an event organised in conjunction with Dr. David Morray of the Department of Near Eastern Languages at University College Dublin.

Dr. Wright lectured in University College Dublin, on 21 April 1999; at a conference at Harvard University and at Trinity College Dublin as part of the Bronfmann Lecture Series of the Herzog Centre. She also attended conferences in Oxford and SOAS, London. Dr. Wright continued to serve on the Working Group on Education and Outreach of the Council of National Cultural Institutions and on the Consultative Committee on Biblical and Near Eastern Studies, a subcommittee of the Royal Irish Academy. In Spring 1999, a grant was approved by the Barakat Trust to assist with the publication of Dr. Wright’s doctoral thesis.

Ms. Ward: from January until June 1999 she continued preparing Reference Library material for the move to Dublin Castle, including cataloguing and boxing items. In June, the first consignment of boxed material was crated and Ms. Ward supervised its removal to the Castle, where it was temporarily shelved. She also spent several weeks last summer checking the library's old card index against the computer catalogue, with the help of Ms. Geraldine Healy. In August a second consignment was crated at Shrewsbury Road and shipped. She also continued researching automated library systems for the new Reference Library.

Mr. Bagley: in addition to an especially heavy burden of work in connection with the new development, Mr. Bagley served on the Committee of the Irish Museums Association and on the Information Technology Working Party of The Council of National Cultural Institutions.

Mr. Coleman: joined the staff in September 1999 and concentrated on recruitment, staff development, planning the office move, appointing a restaurant franchisee, various contractors, developing customer service policies and assisting the Director with personnel matters.

Ms. Greif: in addition to her normal responsibilities serves on the joint- marketing meetings of the Council of National Cultural Institutions and attended the presentation of the Institutions at the Embassy of Ireland in London.

STAFF OF THE LIBRARY

Director: Michael Ryan, MA, Ph.D., MRIA, FSA

Curator, Western Collections: Charles Horton, MA, Dip. Archive

Curator, East Asian Collections: Clare Pollard, MA, D. Phil

Curator, Islamic Collections: Elaine Wright, MA, D. Phil

Reference Librarian: Celine Ward, BA, Dip. Lib. (from December: contract post to December)

Technical Manager: Don Bagley, M.Sc.

Operations Manager: John Coleman, M. Litt., Dip. Arts, Admin, FRSA (from September)

Finance and Marketing Manager: Vera Greif

Personal Assistant to Director: Sheila Kulkarni, MA, Dip. Arts Admin (from December)

Administrative Assistant: Sinead Ward, BA, Dip. Heritage Management (from December)

Shop Manager: Geraldine Healy, BA, Dip. Heritage Management (from December)

Head Attendant: Anthony Hutchings

Senior Attendants: Albert Mason, Kevin Hackett

Attendants: James Curran, John Madden, Joseph Doyle, Val Kavanagh, David Holmes-O'Byrne

Research Assistants (various dates)

Kevin McLoughlin, MA,

Rachel O'Connor, BA (Mod.)

Sheila Kulkarni, MA, Dip. Arts Admin,

Catherine Yvard, BA (Mod.)

Charlotte Schriwer, MA

Catherine Giltrap, BA (Mod.)

Sinead Ward, BA, Dip. Heritage Management

Stephen Farrell

Veronica Ryan, BA (Mod)

Contract Consultants/Advisors

Exhibition Designers: Event Communications Ltd.

PR: Margaret Coyne Associates

Conservation: Susan Corr, Adrian Kennedy, Clíodhna Devitt, Jenny Slevin

Packing/art handling Finbar Kelly, Garry Keleghan

Fundraising: Lydia Kan

Information Technology: Peter Wood

Volunteer Guides

Mrs. Marian Grimes

Ms Maura Fraser

Mrs. Kate Robinson

Mrs. Delphine Kelly

Ms. Moya Carey

Mr. Charles Aliaga-Kelly

Mr. William Aliaga-Kelly

Mrs. Josephine McKenna

Mrs. Mary O'Sullivan

Mrs. Angela Gaffey

	1999	1998
Income and Expenditure Accounts		
Grant in Aid	613	556
Other Income	22	29
	<u>635</u>	<u>585</u>
Operating Expenses	(744)	(622)
Operating Deficit	<u>(109)</u>	<u>(37)</u>

Balance Sheets

Current Assets (Note 1)	6,971	45
Current Liabilities (Note 1)	<u>(6,975)</u>	<u>(50)</u>
Net Current Liabilities	(4)	(5)
Fixed Assets (Note 2)	<u>176</u>	<u>485</u>
	<u>172</u>	<u>480</u>

Represented by:

Capital Funds	378	577
Income and Expenditure Account - Deficit	<u>(206)</u>	<u>(97)</u>
	<u>172</u>	<u>480</u>

Note 1

Current Assets and Current Liabilities include the proceeds of sale of the Library's former premises at Shrewsbury Road which were remitted to the State since 31 December 1999 under the terms of the arrangements for the relocation of the Library to Dublin Castle.

Note 2

- (i) The Library contents are excluded from the accounts due to the unavoidable uncertainty in valuing them.
- (ii) The Library's long leasehold premises at Dublin Castle and most of its fit-out are provided by the State and are excluded from the accounts.

