



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council
Galway County Libraries Collection,
1924-1998

G01/05

A Descriptive List Prepared by Galway County Council Archives

Galway County Council
Galway County Libraries Collection,
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Introduction

Galway County Council Archives Service acquired this collection from the County Library by official transfer in 2000. It consists of a variety of records dating from 1924-1998, including minute books, financial records, and a small assortment of material relating to the administration of the Galway County Libraries. The collection provides an important and extensive view of the development and administration of the library service in Galway.

Several additional items (e.g. additions to G01/5/13, and G01/5/15B) were added to the collection in 2014.

Background

Town councils were allowed by an Act of 1855 to levy a rate not exceeding one penny for library purposes and the product of this rate could also be used to meet the expenses of a museum or school of art and science. The council could delegate the business of managing the library to a committee. Town councils were slow to adopt the Act. In the latter part of the nineteenth century a few municipal libraries came into existence, otherwise there was no public library provision at that time over the greater part of the country.

Andrew Carnegie, an American entrepreneur, encouraged the library movement by presenting buildings and shelving if a free site was made available and a full rate levied but the absence of trained librarians and the limited rate levied made satisfactory development difficult.

When the rural district councils were dissolved in 1925 the county councils were given power to adopt the Libraries Acts for the rural areas and enabled urban district councils to hand over their powers to county councils. The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, created in 1913 by Carnegie, abandoned the policy of presenting library buildings but gave financial assistance to the county councils in establishing libraries.

In 1923 the Carnegie Trust established the Irish Central Library for Students to supply books other than fiction that may not have been available locally. In 1948, under the Public Libraries Act, 1947 An Chomhairle Leabharlanna (The Library Council) was established. This body resumed responsibilities for the Trust's functions. An Chomhairle was appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, the members other than the Chairman being appointed on the nomination of representative bodies of the local authorities and a number of approved bodies. The functions of An

Chomhairle included the improvement of the library services, mobiles libraries and book stocks, and to make recommendations regarding library matters to the Minister.¹ An Chomhairle was dissolved in 2012 and replaced under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2012 (Transfer of Functions of An Chomhairle) Order 2012. The functions of Libraries Development are to provide advice, assistance, and services to library authorities, to make recommendations and provide services for the Minister in relation to the public library service and to promote and facilitate library co-operation.

Galway County Libraries

Prior to the adoption of legislation empowering County Councils to establish countywide library services a Library Schemes Committee for county Galway was formed under the aegis of the Carnegie Trust. It was the fifth such scheme established in Ireland. At its meeting in May 1924 Galway County Council resolved *'...the adoption of the Carnegie Rural Libraries Scheme in County Galway, and we, the Members, undertake, individually and collectively, to press for the maintenance of the Scheme out of a County Library rate at the end of the two years during which it has been maintained by the Carnegie Trust'*². Lennox Robinson, secretary to the Irish Advisory Committee of the Carnegie Trust, took the Chair at the inaugural meeting held on 2nd August 1924 at the Courthouse in Galway.

When this Committee ceased to act in May 1926 the library scheme was transferred to Galway County Council. It in turn delegated its power as Library Authority for the county under the Public Libraries Acts (Ireland) 1855 to 1902 and the Local Government Act, 1925 to a County Library Committee. The Committee was made up of elected representatives (County Councillors) and co-opted members, such as local clergy and members of the teaching profession. Samuel Maguire coordinator of the Galway Carnegie scheme continued to act in that capacity, with the title later amended to County Librarian.

The history of the establishment and evolution of the library service in county Galway may be traced though the Committee minute books. Though an incomplete collection (gap for period September 1931 to January 1940) the minutes reveal the major initiatives, issues, problems and concerns encountered and dealt with by the Library as it developed during its first 70 years in service. The main areas of concern related to accommodation for the Library Headquarters and a city branch, provision of additional branches throughout the county, development of a mobile and schools library service, and maintaining adequate staffing, book-stock and book-fund levels.

The first meeting of the Galway County Libraries Committee was held in the County Book Repository, Bishops Court, St. Augustine Street, Galway on 22 May 1926. Subsequent Committee meetings were

¹ Collins, John, *Local Government*, 1963, p112-113

² Galway County Council Minutes , GC1/3, p585

generally held in the County Council Chamber and occasionally in a branch library. Galway County Council took over official control of the Carnegie Libraries on 1 July 1926.

The Committee set out its constitution at its inaugural meeting in 1926, which among other things, acknowledged that the '*...administration of the Galway Urban Library Centre, in accordance with the general rule on the administering (sic) of local centres, be in the hands of the Galway Local Library Committee; and that this local committee report progress to this – the County – Committee*' (G01/5/1, p9).

In 1985 the City, reverting to Corporation status, had a right to become a separate Library Authority. Under the Local Government Act (1955) an agreement could be made that the County Council continue to give a service and that the Corporation would continue to pay towards the cost of same. The cost of the Library Service in 1985 amounted to £632,980 of which the City's contribution was £196,223. It was argued that the implications, if the County were to lose this money, would be to weaken the capability of the two authorities. There would have to be two separate staffing arrangements and an inevitable duplication of personnel, buildings, and book stock. It was therefore recommended and agreed that the structure remain unchanged. However, given that the City could be a Library Authority in its own right it could request stronger representation on the Library Committee (G01/5/3, p357).

The ebb and flow of development of the service is very evident throughout the minute books. The first few years saw an enthusiastic drive to provide branch libraries to rural towns and villages and to ensure their adequacy over the years together with the continual struggle to acquire suitable accommodation for the city branch and headquarters. As the service developed its requirements increased in terms of accommodation, book-stock, staff and finance.

For a substantial period, particularly the period 1960 - 1980, much of the funding available for the service was diverted from building up and replenishing the book-stock to acquiring new and improving existing premises, such as at Gort and Portumna. As a result, the book-stock was somewhat neglected. The book stock declined further, particularly during the 1980s, when Galway County Council reduced the Library's book fund. The fund was reduced by 40% in 1983, and the membership fee was increased from £2 to £5, and later further increased to £10.

Another cut back in Council expenditure occurred in 1988 resulting in another membership fee increase. It was decided to allow members pay on a half yearly basis – resulting in additional workload on the already over extended staff. Members could pay £6 for a 6-month period or alternatively £10 for a 12-month period. The mobile library membership fee was also increased at that time to £6 per annum. In November 1989 the County Manager '*...stated that the book-fund partially depended on the receipts. While the book-fund was £100,000, only £50,000 was guaranteed; the remaining £50,000 must be taken in charges...*' (G01/5/3, p373). The result of these measures was over time a reduction in

membership. The fees issue generated many debates amongst the Committee members throughout this period, in fact until 1995 when the fee was reduced by 50% to £5 for adult membership.

In 1987 the Library book-fund was £163,861 but by 1994 it was almost halved, standing at £98,244. In that year Galway County Libraries received from the Department of Environment a once off grant of £56,000 to replenish the book-stock. At a meeting of 28 June 1994 it was stated that '*...smaller counties than Galway got a larger allocation from the £2 million because they had higher book-funds than Galway. The Chairman, Mr F. Donoghue, agreed that something had to be done to improve the Library Service. He added that a larger book-fund was urgently required...the present book-fund was decided by the Finance Officer and it was £50,000 plus about another £33,000 taken from receipts*' (G01/5/3, p395).

From the mid-1990s there was a slight reversal in fortune when the book-fund was increased on a gradual basis, for instance it was increased by £10,000 in 1996, by £5,000 in 1997 and by £20,000 in 1999.

Library Headquarters

One of the more serious problems continually faced by the Library, one with which it is still troubled with into the 1st quarter of the 21st century, is the need for adequate and appropriate space for a city library branch and for a library headquarters. When the lease on the premises at Bishops Court expired on 1st August 1926 the book repository was temporarily transferred, pending renovation of a new repository, to the County Hospital at Prospect Hill. Shortly thereafter (circa 1934) the city branch and Headquarters transferred, again on a temporary basis, to the Courthouse.

Throughout the years the Committee continually petitioned Council for appropriate space, and constantly alluded to the lack of working space for staff and adequate storage space, and insufficient and inappropriate public areas.

For instance in 1951 the Committee resolved '*The County Librarian be authorised to ask the County Manager if it be possible to obtain a room in the Town Hall or in the County Buildings for use as a temporary reference library, as such a provision would help in a small way to ease the congestion at the county Library Headquarters*' (G01/5/3, p167). However, a minute of 3rd March 1951 noted the '*impossibility*' of this proposal (G01/5/3, p169).

The issue was raised again in June 1955 when the possibility of the City Branch remaining at the Courthouse and the Headquarters transferring to the former Woodquay Dispensary premises at Woodquay was reported on (G01/5/3, p191). The Acting County Librarian (White) reported that '*Until such time as separate accommodation is found for a Headquarters or separate Branch Library for Galway City, further development of the County Library Services can only be carried out with great*

difficulty and inconvenience to staff and readers' (G01/5/3, p193). By 1957 the City Branch had acquired all library space in the Courthouse, and the Headquarters section had moved to Woodquay. However, this still did not ease congestion. In July 1962 *'The provision of Library Buildings in the County was discussed in the light of a 50% contribution to Loan Charges being available. The Librarian stated that areas most in need of new library premises were Galway City and Headquarters, Ballinasloe, Clifden, Dunmore and Athenry....'* (G01/5/3, p240). No further action was taken at that point.

In May 1964 Galway County Council adopted a Galway County Library Scheme of Development. This was a 10-year plan to improve and extend the Public Library Service in the county, incorporating the need for appropriate accommodation.

In 1970 it seemed there was to be some progress when plans for a new county Library Headquarters were considered by An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. However, again no immediate developments occurred.

At a meeting held in August 1979 the County Manager, Mr. S. Keating, stated that *'...the Headquarters and Galway City Branch operated from the Courthouse which was not suitable for the purpose. A properly designed building capable of operating all the different activities of a library service was needed. He said that it was remarkable that the service was as good as it was'* (G01/5/3, p329). Mr Keating went on to advise that he had tried to obtain the Town Hall for a Headquarters and Branch Library but legal difficulties arose and after protracted litigation the incumbent tenant was granted a lease. He further advised that a good central location was needed comparable to that required for any commercial development and that an offer was made for half of the ground floor area of the Hynes Building in St. Augustine Street and that an architect had been assigned to draw up plans for the new Branch Library. An application had been made to the Department of the Environment for money for this project which was to take precedence over all other library developments. At the same time Mr Keating advised the Committee that he *'...had earmarked a site for the Headquarters. He had asked an architect for an appraisal of the site as to its suitability for a Headquarters'* (G01/5/3, p329).

The lease on Hynes Building was executed in 1979. Following renovation work the city branch library was opened on 26 November 1981. The library, which had moved into the Courthouse on a temporary basis in 1934, had finally acquired a new city branch centrally located, on the ground floor, with a bigger floor area than the Courthouse and with a larger staff. In 1992 the Minister of Environment approved an extension to the library. The refurbishment and extension of 2,500 sq. ft., built by O'Malley's (owners of the building) (G01/5/3, p385) was completed by April 1996, enabling provision of a new children's library, and a re-organised reference library. The Department of Environment provided £135,000 towards the refurbishment costs and £92,000 for furniture and fittings (G01/5/3, p409).

In the meanwhile, the Library Headquarters remained in the Courthouse until 1984. At that point the Courthouse, requiring additional space, requested the Library to vacate the building. Alternative, temporary, rented accommodation was acquired at Island House, Cathedral Square initially at the annual rental charge of £31,000. An Chomhairle Leabharlanna subsidised 50% of the cost.

The County Manager advised the Committee in June 1995 that *'...it is envisaged that a City Branch Library and Headquarters will be incorporated into the proposed County Buildings project in Prospect Hill'* (G01/5/3, p403), and it was again advised in November 1998 that *'The Galway City Library and Headquarters are leased at expensive rents. Space has been allocated at the new County Council building for a major Library development'* (G01/5/3, p415). Stage I of the development resulted in the official opening of a new building for Galway County Council, on the site of its former building on Prospect Hill, in April 1999. Stage II of the development, accommodation for the Library and Archives adjacent to the new building did not proceed.

Mobile Library Service

Parallel with building up a network of branch libraries around the county the Galway County Libraries Committee was one of the first to initiate a mobile library service. The feasibility of servicing certain areas of the county by means of a mobile library was first discussed at a meeting in March 1955. The initial cost of providing a Mobile Library service was estimated at £1,500 and the annual running costs at approximately £1,000 for wages, petrol maintenance and so on. It was proposed in 1958 that provision be made in the Estimates for the purchase and fitting of Delivery cum Mobile Library Unit. Tenders were subsequently received in November 1959. The proposed schedule of journeys for the delivery cum mobile library unit was also discussed at that time. The van was finally delivered to the Library in early 1960. During its first months of service it had registered 314 adult and 1,226 children readers. The van was originally used as a delivery-exchange van for branches 2 days per week and went into full time mobile library service four years later. The service continually increased and by 1988 issues on the mobile amounted to 88,604. The service, which is administered from the Library Headquarters, acquired a replacement van in 1991. This latter van was subsequent replaced in 2010.

Schools Library Service

The importance of developing and providing a School's service was also recognised by the Committee early on. The issue of how such a service should be funded was discussed in 1947, when it was proposed that the *'(1) County Library should provide to each Elementary School in the county a minimum of 50 books; (2) The cost of maintaining such a service would be £13.10s.0d for each 100 volumes supplied ; (3) a grant of at least 50% of this cost should be provided by the Department of Education from the Elementary Education Vote'* (G01/5/3, p111). In 1951 it was recorded that the

Department of Education still did not provide any funds in relation to the provision of the service. The Libraries still bore both the costs of the service and of supplying books (G01/5/3, p169).

In 1955, with only 19 centres in schools, the Committee advocated the need for a trained children's librarian to organise and develop the service (G01/5/3, p193). By 1957 with only 40 schools receiving a selection of books by box or those in close proximity to branch libraries receiving a service, it was decided to develop the School Library Service. It was proposed to allow the Principal of any school outside a radius of 2 miles of a Branch library to make a selection of a maximum of 50 children's books from his nearest Branch library for use in his school (G01/5/3, p207).

In 1964 Galway County Council approved a loan for the purchase of books for School libraries, thus formerly establishing the Schools Library Service or Scheme. A specially designed and fitted van for delivery and exchange of books at schools was also acquired in that year. In 1965 with the Scheme progressing, 185 school libraries were in operation, the Council consented to the creation of an extra post as Library Assistant for the required work (G01/5/3, p254).

In September 1968 the Library Association of Ireland drew up a School Library Scheme for Public Libraries, which was approved in principle by the Galway Libraries Committee. The following year the Department of Education extended a grant to the service of £3,035, subject to a five-year review. However, in 1975 the Department made no further provision for its renewal. Its suspension resulted in much discussion within the Committee, which continually campaigned for resumption of the grant. A letter from the Department in 1976 stated '*The Question of payment of the grant for 1976 is at present under consideration and the Department is in touch with the Department of Finance on the matter...*' (G01/5/3, p319). The grant was re-instated but reduced from 35p per pupil to 21p the following year (G01/5/3, p367).

At a Committee meeting in November 1987, Mr Leo Hallissey (Committee Member and national school teacher) stated that '*...the grant from the Department of Education is paltry and that it showed a total lack of commitment. He said that the grant was inadequate by international standards. He concurred with other members in praise of the School's Library service. He said that it was with regret that he agreed to the new charges (library membership fee) and that he hoped that the expenditure would be back to the original figure as soon as possible*' (G01/05.3, p367). During the same period the minutes record that the '*County Manager stated that the Department of Education appeared to have closed minds and ears to the problem of the School's Service. He said that the Service was being achieved at the expense of the general Library Service*' (G01/05/3, p373).

In the 1990s funding for the School Service began to increase. In April 1990 the County Librarian, Mr Tom Sharkey, advised a Committee meeting that '*...there had been good news for the Schools Libraries Service, shortly after the previous meeting. The Minister for Education announced that funds from the*

National Lottery had been made available towards the Schools Libraries Services. It was allocated per head of student population in the primary Schools in each County. Galway had received £57,036.66... Mr L. Hallissey said that it was important to say that 38p per pupil to the primary section was only a paltry amount, and that we should continue to press for extra finance’ (G01/5/3, p375).

The following year the Department increased funding to 47p per pupil, the total grant received for that year was £13,277.03 (G01/5/3, p383). The grant increased slightly in subsequent years; by 1997 it stood at £2.08 per pupil. At that point Leo Hallissey (Committee member) is recorded as saying that ‘*After years of neglect the schools library service was on the way to being properly funded, but rather than being complacent he (Hallissey) said it was important to let the Department of Education know that while the increase was appreciated, it was only a step on the road to a proper and adequately funded Schools Library Service’ (G01/5/3, p309).*

Since 1997 the Service’s funding has continued to increase. A new School mobile library van was purchased in 1997. The rate of the Department of Education grant for 1999/2000 was £2.28 per pupil in respect of 23,505 pupils enrolled in the Local Authority area at 30 September 1999.

Archives Service

However, whereas most sections of the Library continued to receive funding – albeit fluctuating depending on national and local economic conditions - or at least a modicum of regular and continued support and attention over the years, the Archives and Local History sections did not. This was even more so the case after the death of the first County Librarian, Sam Maguire. The importance of preserving the archives in the custody of the Library or developing an archives service received only intermittent attention from the Library Committee and generally only when an external organization made a donation or made reference to the need for appropriate collection care and preservation.

For instance following receipt in 1948 of correspondence from the Historical Manuscripts Commission the County Librarian (Maguire) was ‘*...authorised to prepare a questionnaire on the lines suggested in the report of the conference in London held on 17th November 1947, between the British Record Office, Historical Manuscripts Commission and British Records Association; and that the County Librarian be also authorised to circulate branches, centres, teachers and others interested in local history, records, newspapers, archives etc ; to offer speedy advice where there is danger of loss of such material ; to ask those interested to report movements of archives in danger of actual destruction ; and to advise owners as to suitable repositories for the reception of gifts or loans’ (G01/5/3, p138).*

In March 1953 the County Librarian’s report stated that ‘*Until comparatively recently there had been no concerted attempt at the preservation of local records, other than legal and official documents. The only bodies interested were a few local archaeological societies, to which the country owes a great debt in promoting the safety of these materials, and the encouragement of local libraries and museums. The*

time has now come when legislative action is necessary for the protection of archives. Such action is long overdue. Only in the libraries of the country has any concern been evinced for the safety of the personal and private records of the locality. The official attitude has been one of perpetual procrastination and in many counties, as in Galway, had the library not voluntarily undertaken the task – in a limited way – of preservation of the past, it would not have been done at all. The position arising from the present policy is one which concerns the historian and the student, no less than the librarian. The Galway County Library is not merely a purveyor of the latest novel or text-book; it has also a duty to posterity to see that the source materials needed will be available. The library must strengthen its position, state its case forcefully and frequently, and stand firm against any encroachments upon its rightful sphere. It must naturally be prepared to co-operate with all other bodies interested in the task of conserving research material, but co-operation must be on a basis of parity and its position as a record repository must be adequately recognised. The conservation of local source materials is a task requiring energetic action by all, whether corporate body or individual, who are interested in record preservation. A co-operative spirit, carried forward today, will facilitate the development of a comprehensive programme of archive administration which when complete will infinitely extend the range of our cultural resources’ (G01/5/3, p6).

In 1977 the Committee was advised that many of the Tuam Board of Guardian records – minutes books and ledgers - had been found and placed in the care of the Library. *‘Mr C Townely (Councillor) said that these old records were extremely important as source material for social historians and appealed to people who come across any kind of old business or household records to preserve them carefully and inform libraries of their existence’ (G01/5/3, p323).*

In the early 1990s it was reported that Mrs. Maureen Egan (Committee member) *‘...stated that she has used the Galway Libraries for many years. She suggested that a computer/data bank for research material should be made available. She also stated that she is worried about many groups having access to parish registers and minutes of Poor Law Union and Workhouses, as the material will deteriorate rapidly. This material should only be used under the supervision of an archivist or trained Librarian. She suggested that this type of material should be available only on microfilm or microfiche’ (G01/5/3, p379).*

Despite this expression of concern little progress was made in providing adequate accommodation and care for the archives. Even with the passing of the Local Government Act, 1994, wherein Section 65 stipulated that all local authorities must make provision for the proper care and preservation of their records and archives, no immediate action was taken by Galway County Council. However, in 2000 it employed for the first time, on a temporary basis, a qualified archivist to advise on the appropriate care of its archives and commence work on protecting the collections in its care and those in the custody of

the County Libraries. A permanent archivist was appointed in 2003, initially on a shared basis with Galway City Council. The sharing agreement terminated in c. 2006.

The Archives benefitted from the professional care and management of the Archivist over the years. With the ongoing cataloguing, to international standards, of the material, the conservation of material in need of repair, the introduction of an on-line catalogue. A program of, initially microfilming collections for preservation and access purpose was introduced, and this progressed to digitization in circa 2010. Around this time the Archives' most popular and important collections (such as Galway County Council minutes (GC/1/) and Tuam Board of Guardian minutes) were then made available free on-line, thus exceeding access to a global audience. Despite such advances no additional space, or more appropriate storage, or indeed additional staff, has been provided the Archives Service.

Local Studies Service

However, in an attempt to build up its Local History reference section the Library acquired over the years microfilm copies of many old Galway newspapers. For instance, it purchased many newspapers in that format from the British Museum for approximately £960 in 1967 (G01/5/3, p257), and in 1974 purchased the *Freeman's Journal*, for the period 1763-1783, and in 1978 purchased the *Tuam News*, and the *Tuam Herald* for 1939-50.

Library Development Programme

In addition to Section 65 on Archives, the Local Government Act of 1994 also included another Section directed at Libraries stipulating that a local authority should prepare a library development programme, and that it should include development measures and priorities for the library service.

As a result Galway County Libraries developed its plan and adopted its Mission Statement stating that the objective of its libraries is that *'each of these libraries be a centre of light and learning in their locality'*. In addition, in his 1996 report to the Committee, the County Librarian, Mr Pat McMahon set out the priorities of the library service as *'(1) to develop in each of our branch libraries a quality book collection and to promote the art of reading, (2) to make all the programmes and services provided by the County Library open and accessible to all irrespective of social or economic status, (3) to make each of our libraries a special place for children.'*

'Public library's functions and programmes derive from the conviction that books and other printed matter as well as certain audio-visual materials are powerful, indispensable agents for bringing enlightenment, new knowledge, encouragement and inspiration to every member of the community...' (G01/5/3, p405).



Library Committee Dissolved

Changes in the structure of local authorities at the end of the 20th century resulted in the dissolution of the Library Committee in 1998. At its last meeting the Chairman (Walsh, Tiarnan) said that *'...this may be the last meeting of the Galway County Libraries Committee. The new County Council structures that are being put in place will replace existing committees. A discussion took place on whether the Library Committee should be retained. The Chairman said he had discussed the issue with the Manager and thanked him for his interest. The Assistant Manager (Tierney, John) suggested that it could be recommended to the SPCs (Special Programme Committees) that the Library Advisory Committee be retained. The Manager (Donoghue, Donal) said that Industrial Relations regarding staffing structures were taking longer than expected and that another meeting of the Committee would probably take place in March'* (G01/5/3, p415). However, the meeting of 7th November 1998 was indeed the Committee's final meeting. Nevertheless, the library service is continually evolving and providing a valuable service to the public. Recent developments include the transfer of several branches to new and improved premises, such as in Loughrea, the re-opening of branches such as at Carraroe, the continuance of the programme commenced in 1997 of automating the library catalogue, and since 2000 dedicated attention to the care of the archives.

Patria McWalter
Archivist



Comhairle Contae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Related Legislation

- Public Libraries Acts (Ireland) 1855 to 1902
- Local Government Act, 1925
- Public Libraries Act, 1947
- Public Libraries Act, 1947 (Grants)
- Local Government Act, 1994

Related Collections

- Galway County Council Minutes, GC/1/ (1899-)

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Neylon, M, and Henchy, M.	<i>Public Libraries in Ireland</i> Dublin 1966
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List of Galway County Librarians

	Maguire, Samuel J.	- 1926 - +1955
	White, P.J.	- 1955 (Acting County Librarian)
	Bohan, S.	- 1955 - 1966 (transferred to county Cork)
	Sharkey, Tom	- 1966 - 1969 (acting County Librarian)
	Sharkey, Tom	- 1969 - 1994 (+Oct 2016) (County Librarian) (retired)
	Kavanagh, Mary	- 1994 - 1995 (Acting County Librarian)
	McMahon, Patrick	- 1995 - 2013 (Retired) (Formerly Co. Librarian in Co. Mayo)
	Rabbitt, Peter	- 2013 – 2017 (Acting)
	Gallagher, Catherine	- 2017 – Jun 2019 (Formerly with South Dublin Library Service; moved to Dun Laoghaire /Rathdown Library Service)
	Kelly, Bernie	- Jul 2019 – (Acting)

Senior Executive Librarian

Kavanagh, Mary	? – 1995?	Retired
Moran, Maureen	1995 – 2013	Retired
Rabbitt, Peter	2006? – 2013	(A/Co. Lib 2013-17)
Kelly, Bernie	2006- 2019	(A/Co. Lib 2019-07 -)
Donoghue, Emer	2019 –	
Arkins, Siobhan	2019 -	(Acting)

Establishment dates and history of some of the branch libraries in County Galway

1920s Branches in Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Tuam

1920s - **Loughrea** branch initially based in Temperance Hall. An agreement was drawn up in 1991, but

2014 not signed until 1992, between Galway County Council and the Church of Ireland Body

assigning responsibility for the Church of Ireland to the Council with plans to convert it to a library; An Chomhairle Leabharlanna granted approval for the project in 1995, however due to pressure on the County Manager to proceed with the Oranmore branch first (G01/5/3, p411) the required work did not commence until 1999; the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Noel Dempsey, officially opened the new branch in early 2001 (the Oranmore branch was officially opened by the Minister on the same day).

Tuam - a new branch library was provided in March 1946. Proposal for a new branch in 1981; the former Bank of Ireland premises was purchased by Galway County Council, it required costly renovations and was to be converted into a library at a cost of £250,000 - £300,000 but due to lack of funds was deemed unlikely to proceed immediately; tenders were received in 1989; finally opened in June 1991 – i.e. moved from the Town Hall to refurbished Bank of Ireland building. In 2010 the branch moved to a new purpose built premises which formed part of the Tuam Area Office complex of building.

Ballinasloe – initially housed in the former Workhouse until the building was destroyed by fire in 1955, when the library was moved to temporary accommodation in the Courthouse; a proposal for a new branch as part of the Town's Civic centre was put forward in 1961 (G01/5/5, p233) but rejected in 1965 (G01/5/3, p258); a new branch was under construction in the Fair Green by April 1970 and eventually opened on 24 September 1971. The Council obtained a 5 year loan of £18,600 from the National Bank Ltd. to cover the building cost (GC/F/3, 1973, p30).

The unused former Convent of Mercy³ buildings on Society Street were bought by the Town Council in 2003. The building was to be transformed into a new library and ancillary facilities within the ground floor of the terrace building and old chapel structure.

In 2014 the renovation of the former Convent of Mercy commenced, at an estimated cost of €2.9 million. Paul Mannion, of Scott Tallon Walker was the Senior Project Architect, with Clancy Construction undertaking the necessary works.

1948 **Portumna** - a Library Committee for Portumna was established in March 1948 (G01/5/3, p191) and a branch was operating by January 1950 (G01/5/3/, p160); a new branch was proposed in 1973/74, but due to problems with the site and so on it was not opened until June 1982.

1950 Glenamaddy, with new premises acquired in 1997

³ The Convent Church proper was built in the 1860s and in 1918 the secondary school was opened. The Congregation moved the renowned all girls secondary school to the grounds of Garbally College in 2003 to a new state of the Art secondary school for over 400

- 1951 Oughterard (in Court House building, renovated in 2014)
Spiddal
- 1952 Moylough (new premises opened in 1983)
Woodford (provided with new premises in 1986)
Carraroe (closed in c. mid 1970s, but a new purpose built branch was re-opened in 2001)
Killimore and
Abbeyknockmoy (closed in 1977)
- 1953 - Ballygar
Clifden (new branch opened 1979, Final Account £39,479.54)
Dunmore (originally in the Town Hall, but in 1970 removed to a new site in a pre-fab unit, and again in 2009? to a new purpose built premises)
Headford (closed 1988, re-opened in the Town Hall in 2006)
- 1955 Creggs (closed in 1988)
Kinvara (closed ?)
Gort (the Protestant Church, St. Colman's, was handed over to the Catholic authorities in 1972, this was considered a very historic church in good condition; the Parish priest was willing to place the building at the disposal of the County Council for use as a library; the new branch was opened June 1979⁴). A 25 year loan of £32,700 was obtained from the Commissioners of Public Works in 1977/78 to cover the required reconstruction and renovation costs (GC/F/3/1980, p50).
- 1956 Craughwell, Ahascragh
- 1957 Kilconnell
Kilronan (Aran Island) (run by Miss Una Lundy)
Roundstone (run by Miss Carmel Connolly) &
Carna
- 1960 Mobile library service commenced
- 1964 School Libraries Service established
- 1973 Athenry - new branch opened on 23 November 1973
- 1981 City Branch transferred (from the Court House) to Hynes Building, St. Augustine Street, Galway
- 1984 Library Headquarters moved from the Courthouse to Island House, Cathedral Square, Galway
- 1991 New mobile library van acquired (decommissioned 2010)⁵
- 1997 New branch library mobile purchased

girls. The limestone gothic style chapel building was designed by JK Kempster in 1864 and has some beautiful stained glass windows as well as a tower and a spire.

⁴ It was officially opened by Councillor Frank Glynn, Chairman Galway County Council followed by a blessing by His Lordship, The Bishop of Galway, Dr Eamon Casey, D.D. and the Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe, the Right Rev Edwin Owen on 6th June 1980.

⁵ Manager's Order 1612 for Mobile Library Vehicle, signed 29/11/1990, Tender from W.B.S. Kellior Ltd, £75,024.



- 2001 Oranmore (premises was formerly a Church of Ireland church)
- 2004 Westside (Galway city) branch library opened
- 2006 Kilronan, Inish Mor (Aran Island) - a cooperative effort involving Comhar Chumann Inis Mór, Údarás na Gaeltachta and Galway County Council.
- 2008? Ballybane, (Galway city) branch opened
- 2010 New mobile library van acquired.
- 2014 Ballinasloe relocated to the former Convent of Mercy which was renovated at an estimated cost of €2.9 million. Paul Mannion, of Scott Tallon Walker was the Senior Project Architect, with Clancy Construction undertaking the necessary works.

Some Interesting Statistics relating to Galway County Libraries

Total Expenditure

1959	= £ 16,928
1973/74	= £ 76,796
1982	= £598,344

Book-fund

1976	= £ 56,365
1981	= £144,758 ⁶
1987	= £163,861
1994	= £ 98,244

Number of Books

1959	= 434,456
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Number of readers

1959	= 10,333	
1969	= 14,823	
1981	= 17,698]	substantial increase in membership
1993	= 8,039]	fee during this period

⁶ GC/F/3/1981, p12



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council
Galway County Libraries Collection,
1924-1998

G01/05



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

A. Committee Minutes

(i) Minutes and Draft Minutes of Galway County Libraries Committee Meetings, 1926 – 1998 (with gap between 1931-1940)

1. 10 May 1926 – 26 September 1931, Volume of minutes of proceedings of monthly
March 1932 Committee meetings, recording attendance,
together with proceedings of Committee
business relating to the establishment, management and administration of a county library
service, dealing with matters such as the selection and purchase of book stock, library
borrowing centres and branches, accommodation, acknowledgement of donations, staffing
matters, payment of accounts and so on. The minutes record resolutions proposed and
resolved or rejected by the Committee together with details of correspondence received.
Also generally includes a copy of the agenda.

Minutes are generally signed by the Committee Chairman and dated.

297pp + inserts

Includes :

- Report submitted at the meeting stated that *'Every effort has been made by the Committee (Carnegie Trust Library Scheme Committee) to ensure that no books of an objectionable nature should be allowed to circulate and where a complaint (however trivial) relative to any book such work has been withdrawn at once. No little difficulty has been experienced in book selection, particularly in dealing with works of fiction as the general tendency in recent years of authors has lain more in the realm of sex, psycho-analysis, and other objectionable studies totally extraneous to any story'* (p6).
- Includes the Annual Report and Statistics for year ended 30th June 1926 (p42).
- *'Resolved – That the Committee's best thanks be conveyed to Mr F. Hardiman, Lessee of the Town Hall, for his kind offer of his building for Library lectures...'* (p56).
- *'REQUEST FOR VOLUME OF FRENCH HISTORY FOR GALWAY UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARY. After hearing Prof. Liam O'Brien, who requested that a volume (one of the collection donated by the French Government) on French History should be given to the University College Library, it was Resolved – That Prof. O'Brien's suggestion be not entertained and that the volume be available at the Secretary's office for reference only'* (p62).

- *'Resolved – That the Secretary be authorised to have installed an electric light in the Records Room'* (p86).
- Resolution passed by the Sligo County Library Committee suggesting the formation of an Irish Library Association was read however, the Galway Committee were of the opinion that *'...the time is not ripe for the formation of an association of the nature suggested'* (p96).
- *'Resolved – That subject to the sanction of the Ministry, the Secretary be allowed the sum of £3.7.0 as expenses for attendance at a proposed meeting to be held in Dublin for the purpose of inaugurating an All Ireland Library Association'* (p118).
- Resolved *'That the Secretary press the Carnegie Trustees for a maximum building grant towards the erection of a library building'* (p157).
- Transcript of a letter from the Committee to Galway County Council requesting additional staff, stating *'In our opinion there is no more vital question in connection with the working of the County Library service than that of the means to be taken to obtain an adequate staff for the several phases of the work. The success of a library, especially during the period of establishment and growth (through which all the County libraries of Ireland are still passing) depends to a very great (extent) on the staff. A mere collection of books, however large, cannot by itself perform more than a small portion of the service which a well-staffed library can render to the community. Only a small minority of readers (and under this head we include students) have sufficient knowledge by themselves to turn a collection of books to good account. For the large majority of the population of the county the librarian and his staff are the guides who introduce them into the kingdom of knowledge...'* (pp190-1).
- Purchase of the Redington collection of books from Kilcornan House, Kilcornan, county Galway discussed (p192).
- Resolved that *'Mrs Sheehy Skeffington be requested to lecture in Galway on Russia on Thursday, the 6th November 1930, at an inclusive fee of four pounds four shillings'* (p223, see also p246).
- Resolved: *'That the Secretary be instructed to have framed in heavy moulding and glass, the Medieval map of Galway, issued by the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society'* (p268).
- Resolution of Galway Urban District Council adapted, stating *'That we, the members of the Galway Urban Council, observe from a communication from his Excellency, the Governor General that the question of the granting of Charters, and presumably local government administration generally, is being at present considered by the Government. Accordingly, we desire to take the opportunity of calling upon the Minister for Local Government to restore to Galway her ancient status as a Borough, to which, we feel sure, he*

will agree she is entitled, having regard to the rapid progress made in the commercial and social life of our City within recent years' (p284).

- Rules and Regulation for Ballinasloe branch library approved (p294).
- 4th & 5th Annual Reports and Statistics Years ended 31 March 1930 (printed report).
- Annual Report and Statistics, year ended 13 March 1932 (printed report).

2. 27 January 1940 – 25 April 1942 Volume of draft minutes of proceedings of monthly Committee meetings. The minutes record attendance, together with proceedings of Committee business relating to the establishment, management and administration of a county library service, dealing with matters such as the selection and purchase of book stock, library borrowing centres and branches, accommodation, acknowledgement of donations, staffing matters, payment of accounts and so on. The minutes record in draft form resolutions proposed and resolved or rejected by the Committee together with details of correspondence received.

172pp

Includes

- Minute noting the *'possibility of the Board (Board of Health) disposing of Workhouse buildings throughout the county. Cannot spend any money on the Library in the Board-room, Ballinasloe'* (p7).
- *'Resolved that no books be purchased from English Booksellers unless these Booksellers employ Irish representatives...'* (p13).
- *'Public Records :- Professor F.W. Ryan called on this matter – This material – sometimes called "monuments" or "archives" – is of great national and local importance. If, however all archives were to be accumulated a selection must be made as the Public Records Office or any local office could not accommodate all official documents. The idea is to keep (and to ascertain the whereabouts and the ownership of those in private hands) only such material as might be required for future reference. The question of what is to be preserved is very important in modern archives because of the bulk of the records.*

In other countries, particularly the continental, the State controls the whole of the nation's archives. There are generally one or more natural archive repositories, similar to our Public Record Office, preserving the records of Government departments. In addition to these there are the local repositories which preserve all other civic archives,

down to those of the smallest local government authority.

The Galway County Council has already realised the importance of preserving their own records, and some years ago had asked the co-operation of this Committee to allow our Secretary to sort out a huge accumulation of material – to make a selection of what is important. This has been done and many items of real value have been saved (One has unfortunately to record that during the last war material of great value was sold for waste paper).

The dispersal of deeds throughout Ireland in the past has resulted in the finding in solicitor's offices of collections of deeds and family papers. Family papers are very important to archives. Quite often one or two families have almost ruled a locality, and consequently the correspondence and business matters deal largely with local affairs..... The Public Record Office gives extensive lists of the classes of material likely to be in the possession of the various local authorities and in private hands...

As already pointed out this work is of great national importance and the local library has always been regarded as the central stores and authority for documents of local interest. The co-operation of the public is necessary if our national records are to be saved.'
(pp108-111).

3. 23 August 1941 – 17 November 1998 Volume of minutes of proceedings of Committee meetings. The frequency of the meetings changed over time, initially they were held monthly, from 1943 to about 1976 they were held quarterly, then held half yearly until the mid 1990s when they were re-introduced on a quarterly basis. The minutes record attendance, together with proceedings of Committee business relating to the establishment, management and administration of a county library service, dealing with matters such as the procurement of sites for and opening of branch libraries and centres throughout the county, building maintenance, the selection and purchase of book stock, staffing matters, opening hours, payment of accounts, together with the introduction and development of a mobile and schools library service. The minutes, for a time during the 1940s and 1950s, include a transcript and thereafter details of the County Librarian's report on the working of and developments in the library over the previous quarter. The report generally deals with major initiatives and requirements to develop the service, such as the need to provide an appropriate building for headquarters, additional branch libraries, funding and staff, the continual development of the schools service, the launching of *Galway Reader* (March 1949) and so on. The minutes also record resolutions proposed and resolved by the Committee together with details of correspondence received. Also generally includes a copy of the agenda and includes (during the 1940s) many lists of books submitted by the County Librarian to the Committee for purchase.

Includes transcript or printed copies of several Annual Reports, such as transcripts of 18th annual report for year end March 1943 (p55), 1944 (p76), 1945 (p93), and printed copies for 1948-1949 (p164), 1950-1952 (26th-28 Annual Report, p185) and 1953-1955 (p193).

The minutes are generally signed by the Committee Chairman and dated.

413pp + inserts (total approx. 2,000)

Includes:

- 18th Annual Report stating that *'Owing to the limited floor space, shelving and staff, the carrying out of the many functions of the expanding service is an acute problem, resulting in much inconvenience and delay in dealing with essential work at headquarters. The County Manager has proposed to appoint an additional assistant but up to the present the views of the Department of Local Government and Public Health on the subject have not been received'* (p55, see also p57).
- Twenty-first Annual Report of the Libraries Department (1944-45) stated that *'The past year, which saw the second world war nearing its close, was in a sense the end of a literary epoch. It can be regarded, with its spate of journalists' war experiences, ex-statesmen's panacea for world turmoil and chaos, war propaganda and sex novels, by*

the feeling on all sides that we are moving out of one mood into another. There is a growing dissatisfaction on the part of those who are mainly observers with the literature of dissent, unrest, protest, harshness and bitterness, and the increasing inclination to analyses and to probe below the surface stirring up all that is vile in mankind – a literary licence called the demand for liberty of thought and action. It has been a movement aptly termed “The Abdication of Intelligence” (p93).

- The County Librarian’s (Maguire, S.J.), observations on the forming, as suggested by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, of the National Register of Archives in England stated *‘For many years I have endeavoured to locate public records of all kinds, charters, deeds, etc., in the various counties in which I organised county libraries. I have circularised solicitors, estate agents and land-owners, interviewed them personally and pointed out the importance of preserving material...I have found by experience that without an organisation nothing can be done. I would also point out that I have succeeded, thanks to the co-operation of the County Manager, in saving the bulk of the Minute Books and other material of the various Boards of Guardians and Rural District Councils in Galway. Also, on his instructions, the Minute Books of the old Galway Corporation have been lodged in the care of the University College here.... The question of suitable repositories in Ireland is and will be for quite a long time a problem. County buildings, municipal halls, county library headquarters, and so on, are practically everywhere cramped and lack space for suitable storage. I know that a number of county courthouses could be equipped at a small cost, but generally suitable repositories are scarce.... So far as I am aware, no County Council possesses an Archivist – any such work where carried out devolves on the County Librarian....’ (p134).*
- County Librarian’s (Maguire), report stated that *‘The staff of the County Libraries service the community of the City and County of Galway at all levels, and in all spheres of interest. They deal with the collection, recording and active exploitation of all types of written and recorded materials. Their work requires special skills and technique in the classification, organisation and exploitation of books and data. They endeavour to promote the habit of reading and the wider distribution of books, and it is to be recorded that readers are now keeping them busier than before. Readers are of all ages with an infinite variety of tastes and interests, ...’ ().*
- County Librarian (Maguire) reported that *‘That problems that arise through the use of the County Library Headquarters as a city library continue. Adequate headquarters space is badly needed, and the staff while labouring under the handicap of an overcrowded headquarters are doing great things to produce results’ (p167).*

- County Librarian (Maguire) reported *'As far as a Branch Library, Art Gallery and Museum for the City of Galway is concerned, the outlook seems bleak, but it is to be recorded with pleasure that the County Manager has not lost sight of the matter. New Branch Libraries are being organized, but difficulties are being experienced in finding premises at Gort, Carraroe, and Mountbellew-Moylough districts....'* (p169).
- Report on a draft scheme of improvement for the County Library Service stated that it *'envisaged improvements in Headquarters and City Branch premises higher book fund, extra staff, better Branch Library premises, the provision of a School Library Service, and Mobile Service for Connemara. The Assistant Co. Manager referred to the proposed reconstruction of Courthouse and the improvement which this would mean in Library accommodation. He also spoke on the necessity of providing a Museum and Art Gallery for Galway City and the problems which this would involve and two principal ones being premises and a guarantee of continuity....'* (p233)
- *'...It was pointed out by the Librarian that the premises were now inadequate as a Branch Library for the City and a Headquarters. The assistant Co. Manager reported on proposals for the reconstruction of the Courthouse which would give greater accommodation to the Library but explained that the proposed improvements would not provide for future expansion of the Library service. A long discussion followed on the subject of providing a suitable Library Hq. and City Branch, during which members referred to the need of providing a Municipal Centre for Galway'* (p238).
- Reference to offer made by Murphy, D.J. (N.T.), Tuam to donate his collection of antiquarian objects and other items of ancient folk culture to the Galway County Libraries on condition that they be preserved and form the nucleus of a folk museum to be located in Tuam town, *'..agreed in principle that the Folk Museum based on Mr Murphy's Collection should be provided in Tuam, and the meeting recommended to the County Council that the matter be further investigated with a view to acquiring suitable accommodation for the housing and presentation of Mr Murphy's Collection...'* (p257).
- *'Mr Sharkey (County Librarian) said that "photocopies of the books in the Clonbrock Collection, which were donated to the National Library had been ordered and when received would be bound. Mr Townley remarked that it was important to have such material available in Galway'* (p323).
- *'Mr Sharkey (County Librarian) informed the members that valuable record books, some dating back from before the famine, which included workhouse ledgers and Minute Books of the Board of Guardians had been found recently in Tuam. He had these books rebound by Kenny's Bindery.*
Mr C. Townley (Christopher, Librarian University College Galway) said that these old

records were extremely important as source material for social historians and appealed to people who come across any kind of old business or household records to preserve them carefully and inform libraries of their existence' (p323).

- *'Mr C Townley (Christopher, Librarian University College Galway) '...said that libraries were going beyond the book stage and were installing microfilm readers and other modern equipment and that Public Libraries should keep abreast of the times' (p325).*
- *The County Manager (Keating, S.) informed the Committee '...that the next important project was the provision of a new library headquarters and branch libraries in the city. He said that the present city branch was on a good site but it was on a second floor, was totally inadequate as a Headquarters and that by any standards the premises was bad...', he went on to say that 'at least three branch libraries were needed in Galway City, one in the city centre, the second in the Renmore/Ballybane area where the local services were expanding to cater for a population of about 7,000 and that this growing population would be entitled to a Branch Library. The third area, Mr Keating said, was in the Knockncarra/Salthill/ Newcastle/Shantalla region...' (p327).*
- *'...steps should be taken to counter the slippage in membership. He urged the idea of a Family Membership. The County Librarian told the members that he was not in favour of fees but said that the bookfund was now partially dependent on them. Mr Sharkey also said that the size of the premises and the ability of the Branch Librarian also had a bearing on the use of the service. He said that the Library service must have proper finance to run effectively' (p371).*
- *'Mr Leo Hallissey (Library Committee member) told the meeting that he feared that the Library service was on a downslide. The lack of resources meant that fewer new books were purchased and the Libraries needed a frequent turnover of new material. Mr Hallissey said that there was tremendous good will in the community and in the press for the library and that this committee must be tapped into it' (p381).*
- *Suggestion from the Committee that 'an approach be made to the University Authorities, requesting that each student submitting a thesis dealing with any aspect of County Galway, should be requested to submit a synopsis of four to six pages, on the subject of the thesis, which would be donated to the County Library and thus be available to the public' (p383).*
- *Remarks of the outgoing Committee Chairman included '...that because of the financial stringency that exists in all public expenditure, the Committee seemed to be getting nowhere. He hoped that if money could be obtained from E.C. funds, we could have a more efficient Library service in the future...' (p391).*

- *'The County Librarian (McMahon, Pat) advised the meeting that the '...aim was to have a quality book collection in each Branch Library, but the new technology also had role to play. P.C.s, CD ROMs, the Internet are very much part of life today. Many people have P.C.s with access to the Internet in their own homes. Libraries should be catering for people who cannot afford the technology by having P.C.s available in the library and access to the Internet for public use...'* (p409).

4. 2 February 1952 – 1 August 1959 Volume of draft minutes of proceedings of quarterly Committee meetings. The minutes record attendance, together with proceedings of Committee business relating to the establishment, management and administration of a county library service, dealing with matters such as the selection and purchase of book stock, acknowledgement of donations, staffing matters, payment of accounts and so on. The minutes record in draft form items discussed, and resolutions proposed and resolved or rejected by the Committee together with details of correspondence received.

106pp

Includes

- *'Provision of a Branch Library for the City of Galway :- The ingenuity and enterprise of all have been so thwarted that it seems to be taken for granted that a Branch Library for the City of Galway is impossible under what has been described as manifold difficulties. At meeting after discussing the Headquarters' situation, the congestion, the dual service to County and City with all its concomitants of inadequate supervision, due to lay-out and the factors which make separate stocks common to both – have been discussed. In most of the discussion the provision of an Art Galley and Museum was attached to the subject of a Branch Library for the City. It is a constant bottleneck!...
Due regard must be paid to the character and purpose of a County Library Headquarters and particularly to the unique position of Galway. It was agreed in 1934, when Galway had a population of approximately 18,000, to allow the people of the City to use the County Library Headquarters, pending the provision in a reasonable time for municipal buildings including a Branch Library. Note the words "a reasonable time"! After 17 years with Galway's population estimated at 22,000 and a relatively higher increase in the valuation the City still remains without municipal buildings, Branch Library, Art Gallery, or Museum....'* (p6).

(ii) Loughrea Branch Library Committee, 1944 - 1958

5. 4 October 1944 – 16 May 1958 Volume of minutes of proceedings of Committee meetings held in the Temperance Hall, Loughrea, initially held monthly, held quarterly between 1945-1952, and thereafter sporadically. The minutes record attendance, together with proceedings of Committee business relating to the administration of the library, dealing with matters such as opening hours, building maintenance, book stock, staffing matters and correspondence with the County Libraries Headquarters, Galway. The minutes also record resolutions proposed and resolved by the Committee together with details of correspondence received. The minutes are signed by the Committee Chairman and dated.

57pp

Includes :-

- *'Fr. Egan has asked to please see Books sent to Loughrea Branch be Censored more carefully' (p7).*
- *'Mr Lee considers it been very unbusiness-like in the manner in which they are been treated with from Headquarters, Galway. He said also here is no use in coming wasting their time if their suggestions are being ignored and we would like to know if our correspondence have been placed before the meeting of the Libraries Committee' (p9).*
- *'Rev. Br. Basil requested Mr Maguire (County Librarian) to be good enough to give our Branch a fresh supply of books. Mr Barry also added that they are long overdue and will not take any more excuses' (13p).*
- *'It was resolved to apply to the Co. Librarian to have the Loughrea Branch library (Room) repaired and renovated, as it has not been done since 1932' (p23).*
- *'..to ask the Co. Librarian to send out a decent stock of Books, the Library is a disgrace to any town with a Committee, the membership is de-creasing owing to an insufficient supply' (p26).*
- *'The committee congratulated Mr Maguire (County Librarian) on his decision to provide Loughrea Branch with a complete set of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. (p51).*
- *'.....all present joined in a tribute to the memory of Mr Maguire whom they always found to be a courteous obliging and most official man who was truly one of natures gentlemen' (p53).*

B. Library Committee Attendance Books, 1951-1986

6. With member's signature verifying attendance at meetings, in some instances including official address. Also includes details of rates applicable for claiming travelling and subsistence expenses.
- 10 November 1951 – 29 January 1965
 - 7 May 1965 – 23 July 1986

2 item /c.60pp

C. Financial Records, 1947-1986

7. 22 February 1947 – March 1968 Account book for Headquarters and various branch libraries recording details of accessions from book suppliers, details include date, [order] number, invoice number, supplier, and number of volumes purchased.
- c.500pp
8. 23 April 1952 – 20 June 1956 Day book recording daily payment detailing date, date of invoice, invoice number, nature of invoice, such as electricity, petty cash for branch library, binding, and travel expenses, also includes amount, dated checked, and observation.
- 27pp
9. 5 January 1979 – 6 February 1986 Expenditure book recording date, particulars of payment generally the name of supplier or payment such as petty cash, cleaner, ESB, printing costs, or library supplies and classification of expenditure such as books, binding, microfilms, wages, rent and rates, maintenance, advertising, telephone, transport, and so on.
- 178ff

D. Library Administration Files and Records, 1924-1983

10. September 1924 - 1942 Scrap-book of newspaper clippings regarding the Carnegie Trust and county library relating to and reporting on issues such as censorship, lack of space, highlighting staff shortages, poor book stocks, advising on changes to opening hours, and reporting on Libraries Conference held in Galway in 1934. Includes at least two articles carrying a photograph of Maguire, Sam J. (first County Librarian), and also includes two supplementary catalogues of books added to the libraries in 1930-31, and 1931-32. The latter incorporates the catalogue of the Reddington Memorial Collection (collection of books from Kilcornan House, Kilcornan, county Galway purchased in the late 1920s). The catalogue combines in one alphabetical arrangement throughout author, subject, and more or less complete title entries.
- c.120pp
11. 10 May 1934 Circular letter from Maguire, S., County Librarian and Library Committee Secretary, to Committee members calling a special Committee meeting to consider tenders for the re-construction of the County Library Headquarters.
- 1p
12. 18 September 1934 Statement from Maguire, S., County Librarian regarding payment of driver's expenses and making claims for reimbursement as payments were made by the Committee to him rather than directly to the motor owners. Also includes attached details of payments made and the trips to which they relate.
- 15pp

13. [1930s -1974] Articles and /or speeches by [Maguire, S., County Librarian]. The earlier handwritten article or speech on censorship outlines some defects in the application and administration of the state system of censorship on reading material, stating *'...impartiality and true justice should be the end all of censorship, and private prejudice or the dictates of well-meaning but unqualified advisers should be ignored. Biased injustice and conflicting inconstancy ought not to figure in its administration. I would regard such a substitute system as preferable to that of a watch and ward method of snooping by groups of individuals'* (1930s, p8-9). The second typed speech, addressed to delegates of the Library Association of Ireland, briefly outlines the history of the development of library in county Galway and states that *'For my own part, I owe much to the County Galway Libraries Committee for education, some fun, companionship, and much friendship. May the impulse of the Library committees of the whole country, and of the Library Association of Ireland never weaken or stop. Sound the call that every Library is deserving of local and State help, that a librarian works the better for appreciation and a salary commensurate with his calling, and demand a appreciate of his place in education which cannot, and ought not be calculated in the terms now offered to the profession'* ([1951],p2). A third article, possibly by Tom Sharkey, County Librarian, outlines the history and development of public libraries in Ireland and the services being provided in county Galway, stating that *'I think the schools service is the most important service being provided. Unless a person develops the reading habit when very young the chances are that they will never do so'*, and also advices that the Mobile Library calls to 70 small villages and issued 42,071 books in 1972/73 (1975, p5).
- 3 items / 20pp
14. March 1931 – [1933] **Circulars:** File of material including standard letters and forms relating to the management and administration of the county library services, also includes copy letters from the County Librarian to various organisations including the Library Committee petitioning for an increase in salary, and a statistical summary for 1931-32.
- 26pp
15. 25 May 1933 - 8 April 1938 **Loughrea Branch Staff:** File of letters from the Department of Local Government and Public Health, Custom House, Dublin regarding the salary of the Loughrea branch staff.
- 3pp

- 15B. March 1956 – 1991 **County Library Statistics;** Pre-formatted outsize volume with annual statistical data on the number of books issued by each branch, mobile and centre, also includes the monthly totals for the branches up to 1964, thereafter the monthly totals are included for the Galway City branch only. Generally, also includes the number of adult and juvenile members, and number of fiction, non-fiction. and juvenile books issued in the year. From about 1988 the information in contained on a typed A4 sheet pasted into the volume.
- 196ff
16. 24 February 1983 – 8 March 1983 **Library Charges:** Reports by [Sharkey, Tom, County Librarian] regarding library membership fees and book borrowing charges, stating that *'...I have no doubt that if borrowers are charged a levy on the books they borrow, there will be a dramatic drop in the number of those availing of the service. Those who choose to continue using the service will borrow less books and consequently there will be a huge falling off in books borrowed...'* (p1)
- 3pp

E. Irish Library Association Conference, 1934-1936

17. April 1934 – 17 February 1936 **Conference:** File of material relating to the organisation of the second annual Irish Library Association Conference held in the Aula Maxima, University College Galway between the 19th and 22nd May 1934 and the Conference dinner held at the Royal Hotel Galway on 21st May. Includes draft copy Programme, copy of standard letters to delegates, list of hotels in Galway to assist delegates procure hotel accommodation, and invoices from the Royal Hotel and other businesses.

40pp