

Winter 2012

the Bridge

Maynooth Alumni Magazine

Atlantic Odyssey
Tracking the Irish
Sexual Revolution
Maynooth Memories
& Memorabilia
Alumni Events

Plus

Galway Cycle 2012, Graduate Profiles,
Graduations 2012 and much much more...

**'After rowing 12 hours
a day for a month, in
shifts of 2 hours on and
2 hours off, I thought
my mettle had already
been fully tested'**

Aodhán Kelly (BA '06 & MLitt '09)
Atlantic Odyssey, pg 6



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Winter '12

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NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Mú Nuad



NUI MAYNOOTH
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WELCOME TO THE BRIDGE

Welcome to The Bridge 2012, our annual magazine for Maynooth Alumni. It's been a busy year during which many alumni returned to campus for a wide variety of events and occasions. We also launched our new Online Community (<http://alumni-network.nuim.ie>) which allows alumni to register for events on campus and ensure their contact details are kept up to date.

Alumni have contributed to the University and to the current student community in many ways during the last year - not least of which with their time and their expertise. Featuring Sean O'Riordan, BA Media Studies 2009 and Damhnait Gleeson, MSc 2003, this year's advertising campaign for the University is built around the success of our alumni.



Alumni are also now represented on the Postgraduate Feedback Council. For this and much more, I sincerely thank you. I'd also like to acknowledge the Maynooth Alumni Advisory Board (which now includes Faculty representation) for their commitment to and support of our alumni initiatives during 2012.

This magazine will be available on the Alumni website, <http://alumni.nuim.ie>. If you need any copies for fellow alumni, please contact me on 01-7086492 or by email at alumni@nuim.ie.
Happy reading!

Karen Kelly

Karen Kelly
Alumni Officer

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As my first year at Maynooth draws to a close, I continue to develop an even greater understanding of the magic that the Maynooth experience holds for graduates of this University. Many alumni have recounted the fantastic time they have had here, inspirational lecturers, skills and knowledge gained and friendships that have lasted down the years. Indeed I had the pleasure of joining over 200 of you on this year's Galway Cycle and hearing your many stories and recollections. The collegiality and sociability of Maynooth is legendary and as the University grows, it is something that we will continue to nurture.



Alumni continue to contribute to the University in many ways, and for that we thank you.

Some of you have been involved in the development of the University's strategic plan, which will be launched early next year, some of you have given your time to student career seminars and clinics.

2013 will be an exciting year for the University as we open our new library on the South Campus and a number of exciting building projects begin on the North Campus. I invite you to stay connected to Maynooth and look forward to welcoming you back on campus throughout the year.

Warmest regards

Philip Nolan

Professor Philip Nolan
President, NUI Maynooth

Continue your Maynooth Experience with the Maynooth Alumni Association

Why not join the Maynooth Alumni Association Online Community at <http://alumni-network.nuim.ie> and discover free membership benefits including:

- being the first to know about University news and events (including news about job opportunities or career initiatives)
- lifelong learning opportunities (guest lectures, inaugural lectures, music and cultural events)
- invitations to class reunions (or we can assist you in organising one)
- access to college services like the library or the sports facilities at reduced rates
- networking opportunities at home and abroad

The Bridge is a magazine published by NUI Maynooth. Contributions in the form of articles, graduate profiles and photographs are welcome. We would be delighted to receive your comments and ideas for future editions - please email alumni@nuim.ie

The opinions and views in this publication are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by NUI Maynooth. While every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the compilation of the magazine, NUI Maynooth cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions or effects arising thereof. However any errors or omissions should be brought to the attention of the Alumni Office.

Editor Karen Kelly	Design www.unthink.ie	Print Clondalkin Group	Paper Offset
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1. [Ruth Lankelyte, BA Accounting & Finance](#)

2. [Susannah Cummings and Gráinne Doyle, Higher Diploma in Primary Education](#)

3. [Ciarán Archbold, Ciara O'Brien, Michael Bambrick, Emma Jones and Peter O'Loughlin, Law graduates](#)

4. [Tanya Keyes, MA in Military Studies](#)

5. [Gary Shaw, BA](#)
6. [Ronnie Fay, Pavee Point, Anastasia Crickley, Dept of Applied Social Studies; Professor Philip Nolan, President; Joe Donohoe, Fatima Dublin and Siobhán O'Donoghue, Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, graduates of the MA in Applied Social Studies](#)

GRADUATIONS 2012

This year's graduation ceremonies saw a record 2,900 students graduate from the University over the Summer and Autumn Conferring Ceremonies.

Included this year for the first time were graduates from two new BSc programmes including BSc Multimedia and BSc Science Education and a new Bachelor of Business Administration degree (Business and Management), new masters included an MA of Law, MA of International Business Law, MA of Engineering Renewable Energy Systems and MSc in IT Management. Prof Philip Nolan, President, has called on graduates of the University to put the gifts that their lives and education has given to 'the task of building a society we can be proud to live in'. Speaking at the recent ceremonies on campus, the President urged graduates to use their education to 'make sense of and understand the world...to question, to argue, to think creatively and to imagine new things... to speak out when you see something wrong or a better way of being and doing.'

Among the graduating classes were the first graduates of the Higher Diploma in Primary Education at NUI Maynooth. This is the first year that students from the Froebel College of Education have been conferred with the NUI Maynooth Higher Diploma in Primary Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Special Education. NUI Maynooth is the only Irish university offering the full spectrum of teacher education - from primary and secondary, through to adult and community education.

Alumni Events in 2012

From the Carol Service to the most recent alumni reunion in November 2012, alumni enjoyed many trips down memory lane and reconnected with the University, former lecturers and class mates at a wide variety of events during the past year.

Courtesy of the Alumni Office, alumni and guests were invited to enjoy the annual Carol Service followed by a buffet supper. Alumni also joined in the 75th anniversary celebrations of the Sociology Department in March at which President of Ireland Michael D Higgins was the guest of honour. On another musical occasion, Handel's Messiah was similarly enjoyed by alumni who applied for tickets to the April event. In May, the Honorary Conferring of Thomas J Donohue President and CEO, US Chamber of Commerce was attended by invited alumni who had the opportunity to experience the ceremony and lunch afterwards with former lecturers.

7/6/2012 ↓ Access Alumni Reunion

The Maynooth Alumni Office organised an event with the Access Office and invited Access Alumni who were supported by the Maynooth Access Programme under the directorship of Ann O'Brien, to a celebratory evening event in the mezzanine area of the Phoenix restaurant on 7th June.

A great night was had by all as graduates from 2001 onwards mingled with University staff, associates of Ann from the wider education community and Ann's family during which Ann's formative role with the Access Office and her imminent retirement from the University was also acknowledged.

4. (l-r): Suzanne Losty (2005), Ann O'Brien, Gemma Ennis (2002) and Annie Hayden (2005).

21/9/2012 ↓ Celebrating 25 Years of Computer Science at Maynooth

Phoenix Mezzanine was the venue for alumni celebrations of 25 years of Computer Science at Maynooth. Over 100 alumni, staff, former staff and postgraduates attended the evening. Speakers on the night included former heads of the Department, Professors Anthony O'Farrell and Ronan Reilly and President of NUI Maynooth, Professor Philip Nolan. Over the years the Department has seen significant growth and currently has 650 undergraduate and 130 postgraduate students.

7. Amy Rudd (BSc 1996)

Feb



1

March



2

March



3

June



4

Sept



5

Sept



6

Sept



7

Nov



8

7/2/2012 ↑ Post Graduate Diploma in School Guidance and Counselling Alumni Attend 2012 Special Guest Lecture

Held in Education Lecture Theatre, Education House, Sr Una Collins delivered the 2012 Special Guest Lecture entitled 'A Life Facing Challenges – Reflections of a School Guidance Counsellor'. Una was the co-founder and leader of NUI Maynooth's first programme in school guidance and counselling and this lecture marked her retirement from NUI Maynooth. With Education Lecture Theatre filled to capacity, alumni, faculty and friends enjoyed a heartfelt and often humorous account of Una's reflections on her time as a school guidance counsellor.

1. Sr Una Collins with Dr Tom McConalogue and guest.

8/3/2012 ↑ Alumni Reunion Dinner – New York

We held our fourth Alumni Reunion Dinner in the States on 8th March. Hosted by Professor Philip Nolan, President NUI Maynooth, this event was held in Craftbar Restaurant in Manhattan. New York Alumni, some of whom had significant commutes on the night, journeyed into mid-town Manhattan for what was to be a very sociable, informal evening of good food and equally good conversation. One of the talking points on the night was the 25th Anniversary celebrations this year of the Computer Science Department as attending alumni from the Class of 1990 reminisced about their student days in Maynooth.

2. Angela Sheridan (BSc 1988), Prof Philip Nolan and Brenda Cooney (MSc 1998)

14/3/2012 ↗ Biology Society – Career Evening

In response to an appeal to past students to give a talk to current biology students about their career to date, Seamus Martin (BSc 1987, PhD 1990), Smurfit Professor of Medical Genetics in TCD, returned to Th2 on 14th March. Speaking with great warmth and humour in his talk entitled 'Understanding Cell Death for a Living: From Callan Hall to California and Back', Professor Martin provided an educational and informative evening for the many undergraduates who attended. With food and beverages sponsored by the Alumni Office, the Biology Society have decided to make an alumni evening an annual feature of their calendar of events.

3. (l-r): Derek Maher, Leanne Murphy, Prof Seamus Martin, Naomi McDonagh, Edel Pyke, Margaret Pierce.

3/9/2012 ↑ Hamilton Institute – 10th Anniversary Celebrations

To mark the 10th year since the Hamilton Institute's creation, alumni attended this evening event in the Iontas Building, North Campus. Renowned Professor of Mathematics, Persi Diaconis of Stanford University, delivered a public lecture entitled 'On Coincidence', addressing the influence of chance on our daily lives. Established over a decade ago, the Hamilton Institute has become one of the world's leading mathematical research centres, providing a bridge between mathematics and its applications in ICT, biology and other disciplines.

5. Prof Robert Shorten, Hamilton Institute; Prof Philip Nolan, President; Prof Persi Diaconis, Stanford University; Prof Mark Ferguson, Director General, SFI and Prof Doug Leith, Hamilton Institute.

7/9/2012 ↑ Snooker Club Alumni Celebrate Club's Achievements

One of the main reasons behind the event on 7th September was to celebrate the success of the Snooker Club in Maynooth from both an academic and sporting perspective. Former scholarship winners, current and past intervarsity team members and now alumni joined Honorary President of the Club, Ciarán Mac an Bhaird (Mathematics Lecturer), Ken Doherty (Irish professional snooker player) and Professor Philip Nolan as presentations were made in recognition of sporting successes (NUI Maynooth has won the Snooker Intervarsities in 9 of the past 12 years, and won both the individual and team events for the last 5 years) and efforts while representing the University.

6. (l-r) Back: Dan Gallagher, David Corbett, Johnny Williams, Chris Hayden, Robert Donohoe, Brian Tansey Middle: Stephen Cassells, Mark Loonam, Fionn Mc Donagh, Derek Stynes, Adrian Ormsby Front Row: Andrew Burnett, Peter Mulligan, Stephen Galvin, Peter Dunne, Ciarán Mac an Bhaird

10/11/2012 ↑ Alumni Return for Tour of the University

Celebrating 25 years since they first came to Maynooth as students, returning alumni took a stroll down memory lane as they toured the campus on Saturday 10th November. Memories of Ma Kelly, first year accommodation and Sunday night movies in the Aula Maxima were among the humorous conversation topics. Seeing the significant number and size of the new buildings on the North Campus, brought home to the returning visitors the many differences between student life in the late 1980s as compared to today.

8. (l-r): Marian Delaney, Linda Murphy, Seamus Keating, Joan Mooney, Niall Moore and Hilda Minchin.

Breakthrough offers Hope



Findings from leading research team in Maynooth published in Nature Immunology journal offer hope for treatment of immune mediated diseases.

The possibility of new treatments for debilitating diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis has been opened up with a breakthrough discovery by a research team at NUI Maynooth. Its findings have been accepted and published in the prestigious 'Nature Immunology' journal.

The research findings follow almost three years of intensive research by a team of ten scientists including alumni Ruaidhri Jackson (BSc 2009) and Bingwei Wang (PhD 2012). Led by Professor Paul Moynagh, the team has discovered the critical function of a gene, 'Pellino3', in regulating the amount of protective proteins called 'interferons' produced in response to a virus.

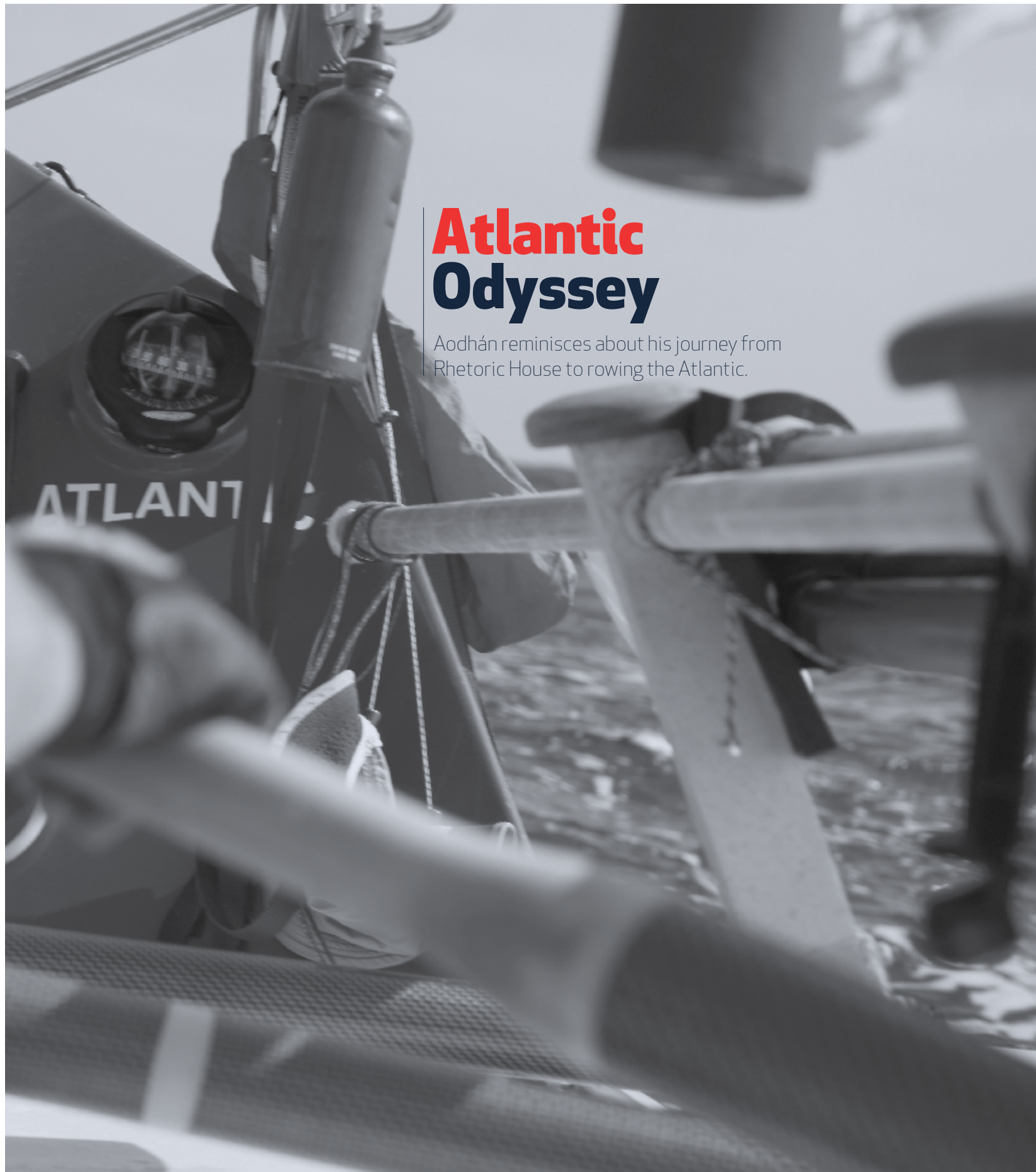
When infected by a virus, our immune system senses the threat and responds by producing protective proteins, interferons, which prevent the spread of the virus and ultimately facilitate the elimination of the virus. The body also produces Pellino3, a gene which the NUI Maynooth team has discovered acts as a braking system to prevent overproduction of interferons. The overproduction of interferons can lead to debilitating inflammatory diseases such as Lupus and deficient production of interferons can lead to diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis and hepatitis, so control over the amount of interferons produced by the body is critical in the treatment of viral disease. While in some cases it is not yet known whether specific viruses cause specific diseases, regulating the production of interferons offers a means of controlling these outcomes.

The NUI Maynooth team deleted the Pellino3 gene in an experimental model system to determine the physiological role of the gene in regulating interferons. The research team is now building on these findings with the objective to develop drug molecules that target Pellino3 and exploit its role in combating diseases that are affected by interferons such as Multiple Sclerosis and Lupus. The team will also investigate ways in which Pellino3 can impact the health of those who are particularly susceptible to viral infections.

Discussing the findings, Professor Moynagh said: **'Our conclusion on the role of Pellino3 in controlling interferons is a very significant breakthrough in viral immunology. The research has much potential for the treatment of major autoimmune diseases and the next step is to determine how the exploitation of Pellino3 can physiologically impact on specific conditions. The ultimate objective of our project is the development, production and commercialisation of pharmaceuticals which can help to combat immune-mediated diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis. Our results demonstrate the importance of continued investment in basic research, which feeds the pipeline through which pharmaceutical development and disease treatment can occur.'**

Commenting on the breakthrough, NUI Maynooth President, Professor Philip Nolan said: **'Research such as this shows the talent and influence of Ireland's scientists, particularly in the area of immunology, where we rank third in the world. Professor Moynagh and his team will no doubt push on and bring this research to the next level, where it has the potential to make a lasting impact in disease control. Our aim at NUI Maynooth is to foster research which influences and improves understanding within its field, and we look forward to further success from our immunology team in the coming years.'**

The research project is funded by a Principal Investigator Award to Professor Moynagh from Science Foundation Ireland and the PhD Scholars Programme in Immunology funded by the Health Research Board. The findings have just been published in the scientific journal, Nature Immunology, which ranks first in the world in terms of publishing high impact and original immunology research and includes only the most influential, important or conceptually novel work in immunology.



Atlantic Odyssey

Aodhán reminisces about his journey from Rhetoric House to rowing the Atlantic.

At the start of January 2012, when most people were recovering from New Year's festivities, I pushed off from the western shore of Morocco with five other men in a small rowing boat. Our challenge was to break the world record for rowing across the Atlantic - Barbados was our intended destination. The expedition, which we named Atlantic Odyssey, proved to be the adventure of a lifetime in more ways than one. But there was no Hollywood ending.

Unfortunately I never got a chance to lounge on the white sands of the Caribbean sipping cocktails while gazing out at the ocean I had just crossed. Rather, after 28 days of rowing, I found myself on the cold steel deck of a Taiwanese cargo ship after being plucked from a tiny inflatable life raft far below. We had completed 80 per cent of our crossing and were on track for the world record when we were irreversibly capsized by a freak wave in the early morning hours.

After rowing 12 hours a day for a month, in shifts of 2 hours on and 2 hours off, I thought my mettle had already been fully tested by overcoming a distance of 2,000 nautical miles with huge ocean swells, difficult currents, squalls, sleep deprivation and an exponential numbers of cuts, bruises and muscle strains. Those challenges are now dwarfed in my mind by the enormity of what it took to get through the 14 hours that separated the capsizing and our dangerous night time rescue. We spent 10 days together on the cargo ship bound for Gibraltar returning over the ocean we had just covered through our own physical exertions. This was enough time for us to debrief and clear our thoughts before the mobs of family and the press that awaited us on the dock. None of us had really known each other a year beforehand but we had all been brought together by a common aim and we now know each other on a level that can't be described. But of course I didn't just fall into an ocean rowing expedition (excuse the pun) - it had been years in the making.

I began rowing at the age of 10 in Neptune Rowing Club in Dublin and by the time I started the Atlantic at 26 I was a veteran of many national championships as well as earning places on a number of Irish national teams. But it was during my time at Maynooth that I first discovered the existence of ocean rowing and resolved to 'try that myself someday'. I doubt anyone in Rhetoric House took me seriously at the time.



Aodhán Kelly
BA 2006, MLitt 2009

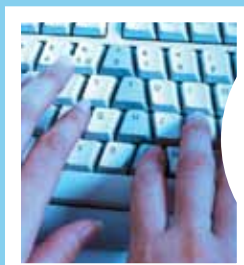
Maynooth had always appealed to me as a university and I decided not to let the lack of a rowing club become a deciding factor in my application. Rather, myself and a few fellow Neptune members decided to set up a club in the college ourselves during our first year. A club which now sadly seems to have vanished, but one which I would love to see revived. I managed to continue rowing throughout my time there and even picked up a few intervarsity titles for the college on the way - which was truly enjoyable.

The university was also a place in which I was fortunate enough to pursue my other major passion - history. After finishing my undergraduate degree in 2006 I spent two years completing an MLitt in history with Professor Comerford as my supervisor. Despite finishing my degree at a difficult economic time I eventually managed to find myself an interesting job in the UK as an editor in a publishing company creating digital learning resources in history for universities. This in turn led to my recent appointment at the London School of Economics in web services where I'm also relishing the opportunity to pursue my interest in history through its various events and societies.

I met a lot of wonderful people during my five years at Maynooth. They now form an important part of the support network which has helped make my pursuits a reality be they on or off the water - and for that I am very grateful.

Those people always ask me the same question about the Atlantic, 'would you do it again?'

Despite the terrifyingly close call I can honestly say I thoroughly enjoyed the experience - the spectacular things that I saw out on the ocean, the funds raised for my charity Plan International and the lessons I have learned about myself, about people and about life. The answer to the question is - maybe.



[www.guardian.co.uk/
commentisfree/series/
racism-in-a-digital-age](http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/series/racism-in-a-digital-age)

Understanding Racism in a Digital Age

Media Studies lecturer, Dr Gavan Titley and The Guardian join forces to explore racism in the world of digital media

A major new series, launched earlier this year by The Guardian and devised by NUI Maynooth Media Studies Lecturer Dr Gavan Titley and the editors of Guardian Comment is Free, explores how racism is understood in public debate, and how it is debated in the interactive spaces of digital media.

According to Dr Titley, the series was inspired by the fact that racism continues to dominate the headlines, from the rise of the far-right to the prevalence of racism in sport, to the status of racial abuse on social media. Nevertheless, not only is the nature and impact of racism disputed, the very idea of racism is contested.

'Racism is at once everywhere and nowhere', Dr Titley said. 'On the one hand, the recent focus on the far-right in Europe, and the continuing stream of incidents involving politicians and celebrities, ensures that news about racism remains constant. On the other hand, European societies largely regard themselves as having overcome racism and it has become very difficult for those that experience racism to describe their experiences in these terms. So the main question this series will explore is, 'what is recognised as racism and, in diverse and unequal societies, who gets to decide?'

The series pays particular attention to how online sites and social media platforms have intensified the opportunities for racial abuse, an issue that has received increasing attention in the aftermath of the July 22nd 2011 murders in Norway.

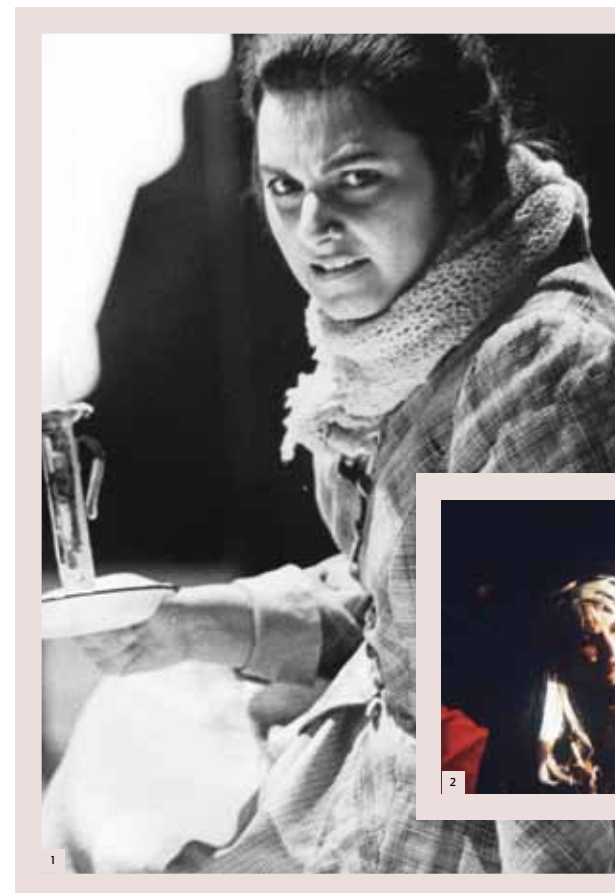
'Anonymity, the ability to network instantaneously in the global space of the internet, and the desire of mainstream media to provide as much 'interaction' as possible has given rise to a situation where writers with minority backgrounds can suffer serious abuse and hate speech when they publish' Dr Titley said.

Dr Titley's contributions to the series are written with Dr Alana Lentin, a sociologist at the University of Western Sydney. Their recent book, *The Crises of Multiculturalism; Racism in a Neoliberal Age*, has triggered widespread debate on the changing nature of racism, and has been featured in such publications as *The Washington Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, and *The Washington Post*.

The series features on the Comment is Free site on the online version of The Guardian newspaper www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/series/racism-in-a-digital-age

Maynooth to Milan – Music & Memories

Regina Nathan —
Opera Singer BA 1982, HDip 1983



1. Regina in the role of Mimi from *La Bohème* by Puccini.
2/3. As Violetta from Verdi's *La Traviata*.

I recently had cause to call into the University and as always I am immediately brought back to my years spent there. It is such a cliché but it really only feels like yesterday. And yet so much has changed... The Music Department alone was much smaller and some of our lectures were in what is now the Post Office. I have fond memories of 'snogging' my present husband in that same room where we were supposed to be studying for exams!

My experience of my college years in Maynooth is full of lovely memories and of lifelong friends I made there with whom I am still in contact and some, like Fr Noel Watson, who have passed on. He was such an important man in my life. Travelling up and down to Dublin meant I didn't do a lot of socialising but I loved the weekly choir rehearsals which were also great fun especially at the break.

I did find the transition from secondary school overwhelming and it took me quite a while to actually settle in. But I suppose I would now regard college as a space for you to grow and realise something of yourself and what you want to do with your life, whilst learning something academically along the way, which all adds to the experience!

I realised I wanted to sing and went to London to do a Postgraduate Course in Singing in Trinity College of Music and from there I never looked back...at least not yet anyway! Since then, I have travelled to many European countries singing in Opera Houses and Concert Halls. My favourite roles to date are Violetta (*La Traviata*) and Cio-Cio-San (*Madama Butterfly*). Singing with Plácido Domingo in the then Point Theatre to a capacity audience of 7,200 people has to rank high on my list. I am only sorry I never took any photos...what was I thinking, or rather not thinking!

I do still get quite sad and nostalgic when I walk around the campus now and realise how fast the years are passing, and knowing that the people who made Maynooth my experience have all long gone. In my heart and mind I still feel I am that same young person all those years ago and yet so much has happened since then.

So I remind myself
'Everything is as it should be.'



Trish O'Rourke (Rag Week '88)

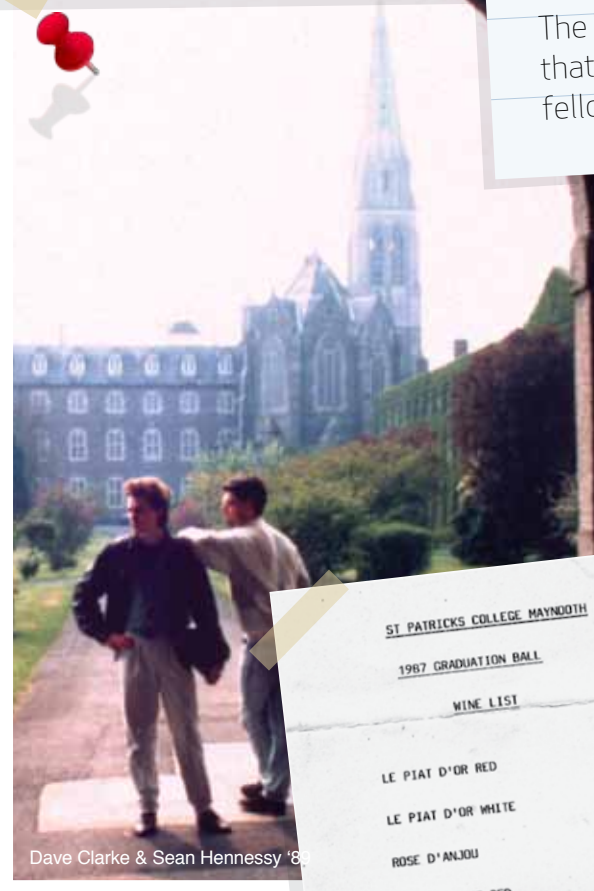


Class of 1971

Maynooth Memories & Memorabilia

Many alumni have fond memories of their experiences while they studied in Maynooth - of the friends they made here, university staff who made an impression and the social scene they enjoyed.

The Bridge asked alumni to send in any memorabilia that they might have which would strike a chord with fellow alumni. Here's a selection of their responses:



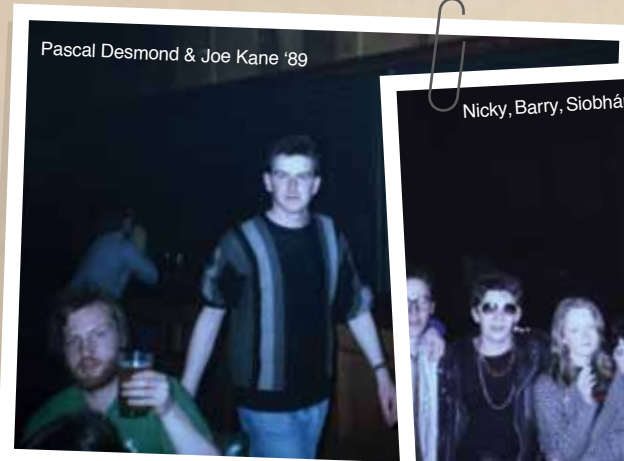
Dave Clarke & Sean Hennessy '88

ST PATRICKS COLLEGE MAYNOOTH
1987 GRADUATION BALL
WINE LIST

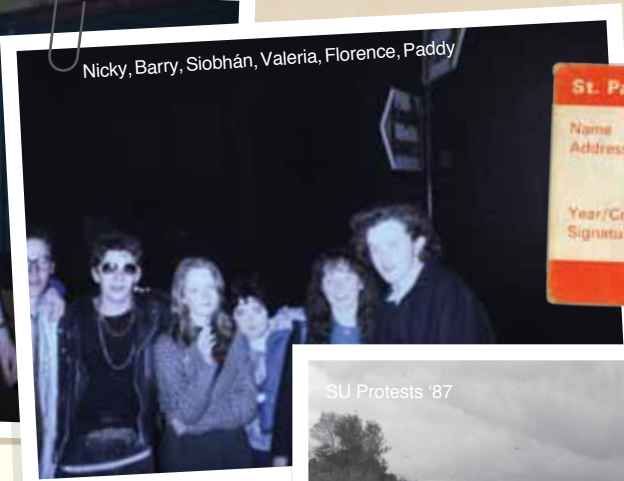
LE PIAT D'OR RED	€9.00
LE PIAT D'OR WHITE	€9.00
ROSE D'ANJOU	€9.50
HOUSE CARAFE RED	€7.50
HOUSE CARAFE WHITE	€7.50



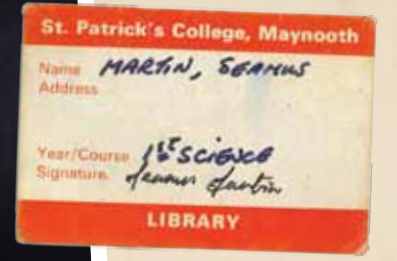
Róisín Weedle, Clane, Co. Kildare; and Seamus Martin, Artane, received their B.A. Hons degrees at Maynooth.



Pascal Desmond & Joe Kane '89



Nicky, Barry, Siobhán, Valeria, Florence, Paddy



SU Protests '87

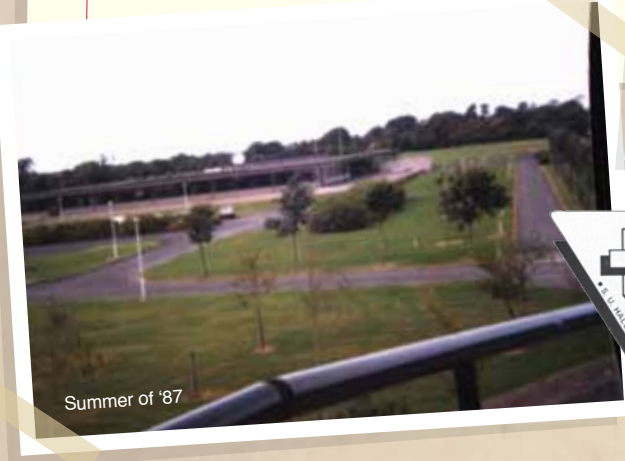
Dear Karen,

Many thanks for your email. I was on the student council for 3 years and was treasurer in 1974 to 1975. Unfortunately I was always too busy counting the ticket sales and certainly afterwards enjoyed far too many refreshments to remember much. However the council brought to Maynooth in my time - Horseship-Wolf Tones and Several Other Bands. I have nothing but very happy days of my 3 years in Maynooth. I graduated B.A. Hons in Geography and History. I played basketball for the college and was a very proud captain of the extern soccer team (1973-1976.) I am now about to retire from Head of Geography at St. Aloysius College in Glasgow after 36 years of teaching. I have yet to make my way back to Maynooth since 1976. I know the many changes and wish Maynooth and her students all the best.

Yours sincerely,
Jim Cassidy (1976)



Barry Byrne & Vincent Martin '87



Summer of '87



A note from the Editor...

Maynooth Memories and Memorabilia will be a regular feature of The Bridge. If you have any items (Photos, concert tickets, etc) that you think alumni would appreciate, please send them to the Alumni Office. All items will be returned to sender. Thanks to the staff in An Foras Feasa for their technical assistance with this article.

Tracking Irish Sexual Revolution in Angela Macnamara Letters

Paul Ryan (BA 1994) charts the gradual emergence of a sexually aware nation through the columns of Angela Macnamara in the 1960s & 70s.

How a nation grappled with its emerging sexuality in the 1960s and 70s within the restrictive confines of a society still tethered to the rigid moral code of the Catholic Church, forms the background to NUI Maynooth sociology lecturer, Dr. Ryan's research on an 'agony aunt' column written by Angela Macnamara from 1963 to 1980 in *The Sunday Press*.

In his book 'Asking Angela Macnamara: An Intimate History of Irish Lives', Dr. Ryan found that the column played a key role in the transformation of Irish sexuality from the 1960s onwards with letters revealing a nation anxiously seeking guidance on intimate matters while simultaneously beginning to challenge the conservative Catholic status quo. The letters, according to Dr. Ryan, give an alternative story of Irish people's lives in the 1960s and 70s.

'The letters are an incredible resource and paint an intimate picture of a people emerging from the cocoon of rigid religious fervour and examining their lives more closely. From the desire for more intimacy amongst couples to complaints about licentious behaviour from the more traditional readers, the columns gave a voice to the people of Ireland who had no-one else to turn to for enlightened answers', he said, adding that the book also challenges a view of the Irish as being exceptionally emotionally and sexually repressed.

Drawing on his own academic research and comparing and contrasting studies of sexuality in Britain and the United States, Dr. Ryan said that Irish attitudes were not so very different.

Angela Macnamara was a young mother when she began writing the column in 1963. Born in Rathgar to a middle class family she began her career with *The Sunday Press* by writing a series of articles on teenage dating. Such was the response that the editor invited her to reply to some of the letters.

Every week, she answered a selection of letters in her column and privately responded to hundreds more on a range of taboo topics that included homosexuality, marital relations and the sexual mores of the time. The advice dispensed was very much in line with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church in Ireland. However, as exposure to mass media increased and the influence of television grew, people began to question the official guardians of Irish chastity. The letters reflected this slowly evolving attitude to private matters and show a growing confidence on the part of the readers to make their own decisions about intimate matters. It was this exchange of views that gave the column an interactive quality with the discourse providing a catalyst for debate, change and modernization in Ireland.

Dr. Ryan, who has lectured at NUI Maynooth since 2007, has analysed hundreds of the letters Macnamara received, which numbered at least 4,000 each year. Drawing from this research and extensive interviews with men who read the column over the years, he has exposed as a myth the hitherto accepted notion of men being unable to communicate effectively about intimate concerns.

'The letters give us an alternative story of Irish men's lives in the 1960s and 70s. Previously understood as cold, unemotional, patriarchal figures, I argue that men simultaneously showed a more romantic side in their relationships with often greater involvement in child rearing that has been recognized. Men at that time had an alternative understanding of romance – it was something done rather than spoken.'

Homosexuality, which caused much controversy and argument in Catholic Ireland, emerged as one of the topics that Macnamara's column helped to demystify. Although she received letters on homosexuality in the early 1960s, it was not until 1966 that the first letter on the issue appeared. While her initial response was that gay men were 'going through a phase', over the years her tone changed and she became a much more compassionate voice for the homosexual community. Some letters featured in Macnamara's column were from parents worried about their waning influence over their children while others dealt specifically with the frustrations of marital life.

Indeed, Ireland may not have enjoyed the Swinging Sixties in all its glory but it seems clear from Dr. Ryan's book that a quietly confident revolution was indeed underway.



Quotes from letters and responses in Angela's columns during the 70's and 80's

Advice on Prayer at Home 19th March 1972

Q. In your reply to the parent who wrote about the family rosary you said 'let it be clear to your children that there is no obligation to join in family prayer'... firstly isn't there an obligation to respect their parents. If they do respect them they won't refuse to join them for ten minutes each evening for the family rosary... I believe the family rosary should be said in every Catholic home daily.

A. I certainly agree with you that from the earliest years families should pray together daily. But as children grow I don't think they should be forced on their knees and I do think they should have an opportunity to discuss their feelings on the matter.

Issue of Homosexuality 2nd April 1978

Q. Our son is 21 years of age and has just informed us that he is homosexual. We are horrified. I feel absolutely numb. His father's reaction was to tell him to leave home immediately. He has done this. I feel that it would have been impossible for us to go on having him at home and knowing this about him. At the same time I wonder if his father has been too harsh...

A. In telling you that he has homosexual tendencies your son has been honest and has shared something that is very important in his life. For too long we have condemned out of hand the person whose sexual tendencies are not the norm... However, the fact remains that there are many people who are this way that lead lives of great integrity, responsibility and love... I do hope now that you have had time to think about it you will contact your son and assure him that your love for him is not conditional and you want him to know that home will always be home for him.'

Marital Intimacy 13th April 1980

Q. How I would love if my husband made love to me. Now, I don't mean sex – he's always ready to have sex... I mean if we have sex it only takes a short time and I feel little or no response. I don't think Irish men in this country know how to make love.

A. I understand the hurt that is caused a lot of women by their husbands lack of understanding of the primary needs of a wife... A woman can best respond to a man if she has been tenderly loved, spoken to with loving words, gently caressed' her physical arousal takes place under such loving circumstances.

Galway Cycle Making a difference

The 25th Year of the Galway cycle was always going to be special. The Galway Cycle was initiated in 1988, when a group of students from the University decided to cycle the return trip to Galway to fundraise for charity.

The tasks were many – some people hopped on the collectors' bus, borrowed a friend's bike, shook a bucket, wore the cycling jersey, donned the colourful hoodie, drove a mini bus, initiated a sponsorship deal, cooked the breakfast or rode a motorbike for safe escort. Lifelong friendships - not to mention a couple of marriages – were made along the way.

From its origins in 1988, the organisation has grown and developed to become one of the largest independent fundraising events in Ireland with organisations annually pitching to be the chosen charity. The Galway Cycle family today includes students, staff, Alumni, friends and family of Alumni and those who have joined us through the various charities throughout the years and remain with us on our 400 km return peloton across the country on a cold March weekend. The charity selected for Galway Cycle 2012 (GC12) was Down Syndrome Ireland and the aim was to raise funds to provide early intervention centres nationwide.

As always the planning began in September 2011 with fundraisers including table quizzes, tag rugby leagues, book sales, bag packs, carol singing, and tractor races to name but a few, all starting to kick off the countdown.

Apart from the social events the well-established training cycles meeting on a Saturday morning at the College gates continued to build momentum.

For the 25th Year celebrations a separate committee was established to focus on marking the occasion. It was an honour and privilege that the new President of NUI Maynooth, Professor Philip Nolan wholeheartedly accepted the invitation issued by Galway Cycle President Donnacha Gayer to join the cycle to and from Galway in March 2012.



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On Friday March 23rd 211 cyclists, 35 support crew and 50 collectors departed Maynooth for the cycle to Galway, arriving that evening into celebrations in Eyre Square. This experience was replicated with the safe return back into Maynooth town square on Sunday evening to a warm welcome of family and friends. It was particularly meaningful to welcome back those previously involved with the Galway cycles over the previous 24 years. With pride GC12 presented a cheque to Down Syndrome Ireland in August for €150,000. This year's fundraising brings to almost €900,000 the amount raised since the Galway Cycle began 25 years ago. None of this would have happened without the incredible amount of hard work delivered by the committees and members of the Galway Cycle making it into a major fundraising event in the University's calendar.

Plans for GC13 are already well underway with The Jack and Jill Foundation as the selected 2013 beneficiary. As 2013 is the year of The Gathering, all who come back annually are welcome to join GC13.

For further information please visit www.galwaycycle.ie, www.facebook.com/galwaycycle, and Twitter @galwaycycle or email president@galwaycycle.ie

[1. The GC 2012 Team in Galway.](#)

[2. Collecting for charity – Prof Philip Nolan and Elisa Burgio](#)

[3. Martin Rocks, leader of the 25th Cycle with \(from left\) Amanda Grady, Alan Nugent, Shelley Spillane, Kevin Sweeney, Conor McHugh, Caoimhe Ryan and Dave Hickey.](#)

Postgraduate Leanne Hegarty captured the spirit of the event in a poem delivered to all on the Saturday night in Monroe's which has become the Galway Cycle Mission –

Mission

Choose a president, choose a charity, choose a bike, choose training cycles, choose cleats, fall off, get back on, fall off again, choose more training cycles, feel the nerves, choose setting off at 6.30am with over 200 people, grit your teeth going uphill, reap the reward of going downhill, choose a new friend every few kilometers, choose Lucozade, Lucozade and more bloody Lucozade, choose arriving in Eyre Square to tears and laughs and heartfelt hugs, choose dancing the night away on aching legs, choose shaking buckets, singing songs and painting faces, dress as wonder woman, a smurf, a monkey, raise €150,000, choose not to sleep, choose pushing your body past its limits, take a ride in an ambulance, recover and get back on, choose making yourself proud, choose making the best of friends and memories that will last a lifetime, choose a feeling that you'll find nowhere else, choose Galway Cycle for the best time of your life!



An Arab Spring in My Step

As a journalist, David Lynch (BA 1999, MA 2000) has reported extensively from the Middle East. Here he describes for The Bridge a career highlight – his experience in Cairo.



'I don't know what is going to happen in the next few years.'

'Maybe it will be good, maybe it will be bad. It's ok with me not to know.'

'Under Mubarak you could not imagine or dream, because the future was already decided. It was already known.'

I was interviewing 23 year old entrepreneur Ahméd, near my Cairo apartment. It was May and the initial high hopes of the Egyptian revolution were giving way to widespread anxiety and street battles.

However Ahméd remained upbeat. 'After 60 years of a military regime it's normal to have problems. At least now... we can all imagine things different.' Ahméd's rugged idealism was echoed among the many revolutionaries I met in a Tahrir Square in revolt, or in the markets and cafes of Egypt's capital.

It is two years since the so called 'Arab Spring' toppled a dictator in Tunisia and rocked a regime in Cairo. Since then, the region wide revolt has come to a horrific halt at the gates of Damascus and many now question the initial optimism that fuelled the uprising. However in the ten months I lived and reported from a Cairo in tumult, I remained optimistic about the liberating promise of the 'Arab Spring'. From talking to revolutionaries over the sound of clashes around us or wading through thick tear gas in Tahrir or sipping thick coffee with dissidents beside the Nile- there remained a strong sense of the possible among the youth I met.

I had reported extensively from the region, in places like Palestine, Israel, Lebanon- but Cairo was different, the experience the highlight of my career. In the intense months prior to the recent Presidential election there was palpable sense that no one knew where the Egyptian revolution was going- revolution or counter revolution. While deadly street battles regularly broke out in Downtown Cairo between activists and military forces- normal life of a sort, continued in other parts of the city.

I often left my apartment on the west bank of the Nile, the ordinary rhythms of daily Cairo life around me- the call to prayer, the hustle of the souq, and the incessant (and clinically insane) traffic. But then I would make the 15 minute walk to Tahrir Square, and entered a heaving mass of tens of thousands of people united against military rule.

My final report for RTÉ Radio was in the hours after Egyptians' freely elected their new President. Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed Morsi came to power facing huge economic and political difficulties and the future is impossible to predict. But what is certain, is that a new rebellious and democratic spirit is strong among millions of Egyptians and that is a source of hope.

**David is the author of 'A Divided Paradise-An Irishman in the Holy Land' (New Island) and is currently writing a study of poet Thomas Kinsella.*



Great Sport!

2012 All-Ireland success for Maynooth Scholars

Maynooth students, past and present were well represented in this year's All-Ireland Finals. Alumnus and former GAA scholarship recipient, Rory Kavanagh is a Donegal mid-fielder who played on the winning All-Ireland team. Rory graduated in 2003, with a BA in Nua-Ghaeilge and Geography.

Four of the University's current GAA Scholars also won coveted All-Ireland Medals in September. Patrick McBrearty, First Arts, is a member of the Donegal Senior Football Team who won the Sam Maguire, while Emile Mullan, Eric Lowndes and Niall Walsh are members of the Dublin Team who won this year's All-Ireland Minor Football Championship. All three are first years; Emile is studying law, Niall is studying Arts and Eric is studying the NUI Maynooth / Froebel College of Education BEd programme.

[Paddy McBrearty in action against Mayo in the All-Ireland final.](#)

NUI Maynooth Golf Team win Barton Shield

The Maynooth golf team have topped a remarkable season by winning this year's Chartis Europe sponsored Barton Shield final at Kinsale Golf Club, beating Banbridge by eight holes in the process.

Prof Philip Nolan, President of the University, congratulated the players saying 'their success at this level is all the more remarkable considering it is only the second time that they have participated in the Barton Shield tournament. Their victory is a testament to the dedication and sportsmanship of the players, their team manager and the co-ordinators of the Paddy Harrington Golf Scholarship. It highlights the importance of investing in talented sportspeople and ensuring that they achieve a world-class education while simultaneously pursuing their sporting ambitions.'

Conor O'Rourke (final year Business & Management), Jonathan Yates (1st Year Arts), Barry Anderson (Finance & Accounting alumnus who achieved top marks in final year Economics in 2012) and Gary Hurley (1st year Business & Management) have benefited from the Paddy Harrington Golf Scholarship, now the leading programme of its kind in Ireland and on a par with golfing scholarships based in the US.

Alumnus Barry Fennelly (BBS Business & Management 2010), Manager, Paddy Harrington Golf Scholarship Programme and former Harrington golf scholar commented 'at NUI Maynooth our aim is to provide a platform for golfers of international standard to achieve their golfing and academic potential during the course of their study. My role is to deliver this by implementing a structured and competitive golf programme'.

[Barry Fennelly and the winning Barton Shield team](#)

GAA Officer Retires

The occasion of the 2012 GAA Awards was used to mark Tom Maher's retirement as NUI Maynooth's GAA Officer. The full membership of all four GAA Clubs (Men's Football, Women's Football, Camogie and Hurling) along with all of his coaching and support teams were present to honour Tom's 15 years of work on behalf of sport at NUI Maynooth. Professor Philip Nolan, President, Suzanne Holmes, MBNA, dignitaries from Leinster GAA and colleagues past and present attended to show Tom their appreciation.

Paul Davis, Sports Officer, paid tribute to Tom whose use of the uniform black-and-amber colours with the NUI Maynooth crest, across multiple teams, helped stamp a strong 'NUI Maynooth' identity in the world of third-level GAA. He was influential in the passing of the 1999 student / university levy for the establishment of the new playing fields and extension to the sports centre on the North Campus.

Player commitment and programmes were strengthened after he struck a deal with MBNA for the MBNA/GAA scholarship scheme which has benefited many students (including some senior inter-county all-stars) over 14 years. Since their inception in 1998, the MBNA GAA scholarships have supported over 200 students to achieve their academic and sporting potential. Alumni of the programme are from across the country and include an astounding 24 All-Ireland medal winners, 6 All-Star Awards and almost half of the recipients have played Senior inter-county Championship for their county.

Tom was presented with a specially commissioned Jarlath Daly bronze sculpture by GAA commentator, Micheál O'Muircheartaigh.

[Tom Maher and Micheál O'Muircheartaigh.](#)

EVENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT 2012



1. President Michael D. Higgins Celebrates 75th Anniversary of Sociology at Maynooth

In March this year the University welcomed President Michael D. Higgins to celebrate the 75th anniversary of its Department of Sociology. The visit of President Higgins marked the historic role of sociology as a discipline in Ireland and showcased the ongoing contribution of sociology at NUI Maynooth to social change and civic engagement.

The Department of Sociology at Maynooth is acknowledged as a centre of teaching and research excellence as well as an exemplar of public sociology. It is particularly recognised for expertise in political economy and work, culture and identity, politics and society and urban/suburban studies.

The Department's distinctive contribution to Irish society continues and can be seen in the breadth of its work on gender and crisis, the future of Europe, active citizenship and critical citizenship, and the games industry. The Department has also played a critical role in the development and professionalisation of the discipline through its outstanding role in the Sociological Association of Ireland over the last forty years.

2. Taoiseach And Minister For Education Launch 3U Partnership

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD together with Minister for Education Ruairi Quinn TD has announced details of the 3U Partnership – a major collaboration between NUI Maynooth, Dublin City University (DCU) and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). Building on the success of collaborative work between the institutions over the last number of years, the new formal partnership will see significant developments in academic programmes, research, education and internationalisation.

Speaking at the launch An Taoiseach said that the partnership was vital to Ireland's future educational success and a cornerstone of Government policy. 'This is a very significant collaboration between three of our finest institutions with very complementary and distinct fields of expertise. Through collaboration we can achieve scale that allows us to compete more effectively on the global stage. It is clear that this partnership will lead to increased competitiveness for major research awards, innovation at the intersection of disciplines, and also the intellectual, cultural and financial benefits of a greater internationalisation of our student base in Ireland', he said.

Among other initiatives, the 3U Partnership will see the immediate establishment of 3U Biomedical Research harnessing a combined pool of over 750 researchers across the three institutions to develop leading-edge research in areas like cancer, diabetes and neurology as well as the introduction of new national and international study programmes, particularly at postgraduate level, which combine the particular strengths of each institution, including Masters Degrees in Healthcare Technology, Humanitarian Logistics & Emergency Management and Global Health.

Pictured at the launch are (l-r) Prof Cathal Kelly, CEO RCSI; Prof Philip Nolan, President NUI Maynooth; An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD; Minister Ruairi Quinn TD and Prof Brian MacCraith, President DCU.

3. Inaugural Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition, Tanzania

The Combat Diseases of Poverty Consortium (CDPC) from NUI Maynooth opened the First Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition, Tanzania in October this year.

Modelled on the Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition Ireland, the Tanzania programme aims to promote and popularize science and technology by linking these disciplines to social themes,

such as active citizenship and the fight against poverty. Participating secondary-school students generated the ideas for their projects under four broad categories – Biological and Ecological Sciences, Chemical, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Social and Behavioural Sciences, and Technology. It is anticipated that the projects, based on the realities within the students' communities, will have the opportunity to influence key domestic and local economic issues that are best addressed via science and the scientific method.

4. Pioneering Third Level Education in Local Libraries

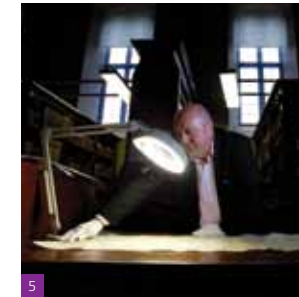
Over 30 students from two library authorities, Dublin City Council and Kildare County Council, recently completed a 20 week course enabling them to experience university level learning in their local libraries. This pilot initiative, run by the Department of Adult Education at NUI Maynooth and An Chomhairle Leabharlanna, saw library users study modules in Local History, Community Development, Reading Enrichment and Sociology delivered by academics from NUI Maynooth in their local libraries.

The objective of the pilot is to offer greater engagement and partnership between the University and the community, and to further open the door to lifelong learning opportunities. Feedback from the participants was overwhelmingly positive and it is anticipated that it will be rolled out to libraries across the country.

Pictured: Bernadette Costello, Kildare Leader Partnership participant and Professor Philip Nolan, President

5. Local Historian Conference launches The Gathering at NUI Maynooth

To kick start the University's Gathering Programme, NUI Maynooth hosted a conference on 24th November. Entitled, 'The Gathering: Local History, Heritage and Diaspora', the conference provided information on the Morpeth Roll (as



featured in the Bridge, December 2011). The event called on local historians to get involved in a nationwide campaign to unlock the stories behind the pre-Famine historical manuscript. The 'Morpeth Roll' is a unique testimonial document signed by over 275,000 people across Ireland in 1841, on the departure of George Howard, Lord Morpeth, from the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland.

The conference also explored the global Irish family and highlighted best-practice techniques in researching and contacting Irish diaspora, of particular interest to communities and groups organising events for The Gathering.

The Morpeth Roll will be launched at NUI Maynooth in March 2013 and will tour the country visiting locations such as Farmleigh, Derrynane, Kilkenny, Clonmel and Belfast, before returning to NUI Maynooth where it will remain on public view.

Pictured: Professor Terry Dooley examines the Morpeth Roll.

6. Centre for Youth Research and Development

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald TD launched the Centre for Youth Research and Development (CYRD) in NUI Maynooth, the first such Centre in an Irish university dedicated specifically to youth. It will be concerned with the study of all aspects of youth in society - young people's lives and lifestyles, behaviour and attitudes, creativity and expression, participation and engagement, issues and problems, diverse circumstances and identities - as well as the study of, and contribution to the development of, policies and services for young people (including youth work, youth justice, social care, education and health). Located in the Department of Applied Social Studies and directed by Dr Maurice Devlin, the Centre for Youth Research and Development has already embarked on a number of projects including an evaluation of the Football Association of Ireland's FUTSAL project, aimed at promoting social inclusion in local communities through football and education hubs, an action research project in partnership with Kildare Youth Services exploring young

people's and youth workers' experiences of involvement in youth work projects and services and the development of a Masters in European Youth Studies with funding from the EU Lifelong Learning Programme.

Pictured (l-r): Anastasia Crickley, Head of the Department of Applied Social Studies, NUI Maynooth; Prof Philip Nolan, President, NUI Maynooth; Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and Dr Maurice Devlin, Director, Centre for Youth Research and Development.

7. IFI to build major preservation centre at NUI Maynooth

The Irish Film Institute, together with NUI Maynooth and key funding partners the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Bord Scannán na hÉireann/ the Irish Film Board and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, has announced plans for the development of a new Preservation and Research Centre at NUI Maynooth.

The Centre will expand access to and preservation of our national film archive collection and will ensure that future generations can continue to learn from and enjoy Ireland's moving image heritage.

Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht commented that 'the IFI Irish Film Archive holds great potential for use as a dynamic cross-curricular educational resource and can play a vital role in the area of media literacy. The partnership between the IFI and NUI Maynooth creates an exciting opportunity for these two organisations to work together to deliver a range of imaginative new projects that harness new technologies to reach as wide an audience as possible.'

The IFI collection spans over one hundred years of stories from everyday life to the great achievements of Ireland's filmmakers on the global stage. Collectively this material tells Ireland's artistic, social and political story over the last century as well as being a record of Irish film culture.

8. The Study of Irish Protestantism

A new initiative, the Centre for the Study of Irish Protestantism at NUI Maynooth, will explore how minorities survive, change, adapt and integrate with the majorities among whom they live. The new Centre, located in the Dept of Adult and Community Education and linked to the Dept of History at NUI Maynooth, is dedicated to the interdisciplinary and participative exploration of the social, cultural, historical and spiritual dimensions of Irish Protestantism.

Tony Walsh, the Centre's Academic Director, noted that Irish Protestantism has coped with dramatic change and has not only managed to survive but also to contribute to the social, cultural, sporting and political life of the state. 'Its history has been challenging', he commented, 'and in recent years there have been new challenges. Irish society has become more secular and more open to minority views. Following generations of numerical decline, Protestantism has experienced a significant influx from disillusioned Roman Catholics as well as migrants from other cultures. These are simultaneously increasing its numbers but also challenging its structures and status quo.'

The breadth of experience of Irish Protestants has much to offer to the understanding of how minorities survive, change, adapt and integrate with the majorities among whom they live. As well as promoting the study and theorization of this experience, the Centre will support the community, as it reflects on the richness of its experience with a view to finding fresh and useful ways of relating to a postmodern Ireland.

'This is a very significant collaboration between three of our finest institutions with very complementary and distinct fields of expertise...

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD speaking at the Education Launch 3U Partnership

Where Are Our Alumni Now?



Joe Costello
BA 1966

1960s

I enjoyed my time in Maynooth. It was an easy combination of study, sport and prayer. There was no heavy ideological preaching, rather an amount of silence for reflection. When the secular academic studies gave way to theology and related studies, I began to lose interest and realise that the priesthood was not for me. I informed the Bishop of Elphin, who was visiting Maynooth for a Bishops' meeting, of my doubts.

Ironically, I met the Bishop again in the course of the summer after I had decided to leave. I was hitching to Dublin from Sligo to go work in London for the summer. A large black car stopped. The driver waved me into the back of the car where a man was sitting. It was the Bishop of Elphin. I was surprised and embarrassed because I had never finally communicated my decision to him. When we reached Maynooth, the Bishop headed in the gates, while I, relieved, headed on to Dublin and took the boat to London.

After leaving Maynooth, I worked as a secondary school teacher for many years. In 1989, I was elected to the Seanad, and, in 1992, I was first elected to the Dáil for the Dublin Central constituency.

I was appointed Minister for Trade and Development in December 2011. As part of my trade portfolio, I am working to develop markets abroad for Irish goods and services so that extra jobs can be created at home. The development aspect of my portfolio involves the management of the Government's Irish Aid program of assistance for developing countries. The Irish people have a proud record in supporting developing countries, particularly in relation to human rights and fairness in international relations. This commitment is rooted in our foreign policy, especially its objectives of peace and justice, and I am proud to be responsible for our country's development cooperation policy and programme.



John Lawless
BSc 1971

1970s

While reading 'The Bridge' recently what struck me forcibly is the extent of change that has taken place in Maynooth since my days as a student there. I entered the seminary in 1968, when the number of 'lay' students was so small that it was possible to know them all by name. Our science class was a small closely knit group who helped one another navigate through the complexities of Lagrange's equations and quantum physics, all without the aid of a computer but ably assisted by memorable lecturers like the Dom Casey and Prof. Gerry McGreevy.

Having finished the BSc in 1971, I went on to study for the BD I was ordained for Waterford diocese in 1975 and spent the following thirteen years ministering in a number of different parishes and as youth director for the diocese. In 1988 my life took a different direction when I left the active ministry and subsequently got married. The academic formation from Maynooth served me well and I secured employment in the Youth Services even though the country was still in the grips of the last recession.

For the past 18 years I have worked with MABS (The Money Advice and Budgeting Service) and my work nowadays consists of casework and staff support and training. Over the years I also qualified as a counsellor and mediator and now live near Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.

In 2000, some of my fellow class mates organised a class re-union and amazingly the intervening years seemed to have made no difference as we chatted together just as if we were back in the junior 'ref' in the late 1960s. When I look at other profiles in 'The Bridge' I'm beginning to realise that ours was another generation but there is continuity as Maynooth has a unique and vibrant tradition which by osmosis is being passed on to the students of 2012.

I would love to hear from former classmates. I can be contacted via the Alumni Office.



Ronan O'Flynn
BA 1988

1980s

I arrived in Maynooth in 1984 not really knowing what I wanted to do in life but hoping that 3 years studying for my BA would point me in the right direction. Embarking on my great adventure, with three friends from school, we quickly immersed ourselves in college life. Fresher's week, Societies, The Bar X, the Elite and the song contest in the Aula were just some of the cultural highlights. I played GAA for the college and really enjoyed college life. As a Dub you had to find a place to stay if you were to get to know the real Maynooth - even a cold couch in Greenfield or Parsons Lane was much appreciated.

We were the first year of Economics in Maynooth. Professor Paddy Geary and Joe Durkin led the way. English lectures with Frank McGuinness at 9am on a Monday. (The only 9am Monday lecture ever attended!) Proinsias in Geography and the great 'Thinking sessions'!

At the end of first year I had a chance to take up a work experience year in an international marketing department in the UK. It was there that I found my love for sales and marketing. On return to Maynooth I went straight into the two year honours degree in Economics and Sociology. Liam Ryan (thanks for the Whiskey!), Michael McGreal (thanks for the lifts in the Ford Escort) thought me so much about life and tolerance. The summer of third year was special with only the small band of honours students on the campus studying in the tutorial rooms with the six computers in the arts block!

Living in Lucan, I'm married to Margie with four great kids who have me heavily involved in GAA and Special Olympics Basketball. I am currently Brand Manager at Wholefoods Wholesale responsible for brands such as Rescue Remedy and Spatone and National accounts sales manager. Recently, I joined the Maynooth Alumni Advisory Board to give something back to a very special place in my life.

Life, Love and Learning were the key to my Maynooth experience and the people I met there have left a lasting memory of great friends and happy days!



Ann Byrne
BA 1990 & HDIP
Community Work 1993

1990s

I went to Maynooth in 1987, and enjoyed three rambunctious years there before graduating in 1990 with a general degree in English, Irish and Sociology. Being lucky enough to have the likes of Frank McGuinness and Barbara Hayley as English lecturers, it is probably not surprising that I developed a love of theatre and language that has never gone away. The time spent in the Aula with the Drama Soc was well spent - to this day I am involved in amateur theatre, and have been involved in acting and directing in Tipperary and Wicklow for 15 years or more. I can't say the same for camogie, another great love while in college - the body rebelled some years ago...

When I finished my degree, I still wasn't sure what I wanted to be when I grew up, so to speak. So I went to work for Coillte while I was making up my mind. After a couple of years I found that I was spending more and more time working on a voluntary basis with youth clubs, older people, community groups - and I began to wonder was this an area in which I might build a career. I began to investigate, and found to my joy that it was! So with a happy heart I returned to Maynooth in the autumn of 1992 to do a post-grad in Community & Youth Work, and I never looked back.

I have worked for a range of community and local development organisations around the country since graduating in 1993. For the past nine years I have been based in my home county of Wicklow, where I am currently a senior manager in County Wicklow Partnership. I am responsible for a number of programmes aimed at combating disadvantage, and the work is difficult and rewarding; difficult because on a daily basis I and my staff meet and work with people experiencing all kinds of hardship and poverty, and rewarding because we can often help them find ways to improve their situation. I cannot imagine doing anything else, and it would not have been possible without Maynooth. I will always be thankful for the education I received there and more importantly the friendships and contacts I made, which continues to support me today.



Brian O'Halloran
BSc 1998

1990s

I studied science at NUI Maynooth between 1993-1998, ending up with a BSc Double Honours in Experimental Physics and Mathematics. Maynooth was in a state of grand transition during that period, both the university itself (as new facilities and programmes were added and the split from the Pontifical University was completed) and the town in general (as all the new estates went up, and the bypass was built). The courses were excellent, though we did look enviously at those who'd follow on after us in terms of the superb new facilities being built that they'd come to enjoy, versus ours at the time. Still, it was all part of the charm of the place! Plus, the students today will never know the pleasure of sitting by the old radiators in the Arts Block on a cold winter's day!

The five years I spent at NUI Maynooth were my formative years, and I immensely enjoyed them, with all my closest friends being met for the first time back then. The nights in the old Roost and the (then) new SU Bar live very long in the memory!

After Maynooth, I completed my PhD in Experimental Physics at UCD in 2003, working on studies of star forming galaxies. After post-doctoral positions in Ireland and the USA, I now work as a research associate at Imperial College London, working as part of the technical team working on the European Space Agency astronomy satellite mission, Herschel, since 2008.

My years in Maynooth laid the groundwork for my career, something I will be eternally grateful for. It will always be a place I deeply love.



Sally-Ann Gannon
BA 2000

2000s

I went to Maynooth in 1997 to study Economics and Geography after school in nearby Kilcock. I had been advised that my chosen departments were excellent and I was not disappointed. Many of my favourite courses were in Geography, where radical ideas overturned the 'received wisdom' I had picked up at school, especially in urban (Dr Brendan Bartley), medical (Prof. Dennis Pringle), economic (Prof. Prionnsias Breathnach) and historical geography (Prof. Paddy Duffy). In climate change classes, the lecturer (Prof. John Sweeney) somehow made this science subject comprehensible and exciting, even to me! As you would expect, training in Economics was rigorous, but thankfully well taught. I was particularly inspired by Prof. Gerry Boyle and grateful to Prof. Paddy Geary who enabled me to go on an Erasmus exchange to France in my second year.

Lecturers were extremely generous with their time in advising me on my next step after Maynooth. I went to Cambridge for a Masters degree in environment and development and had a fantastic social experience there, though for me, the academically stronger experience was at Maynooth. I was lucky to be given the opportunity to work briefly in both of my departments at Maynooth, which gave me a taste for academic administration. I have developed in this area for the past 8 years at posts at the University of Edinburgh and now back at Cambridge University where I am Head of Funding at the Student Registry. I enjoy managing my team and am continually challenged by the finance and policy elements of the role. I am amused that a colleague at Oxford University in a similar position is also a Maynooth graduate from around the same time!

My father, who graduated from Maynooth in the 1970s returned for postgraduate education, as has my mother recently, so we feel a strong family connection to the college. We all like to walk in the magnificent, welcoming grounds when I am back in Maynooth.

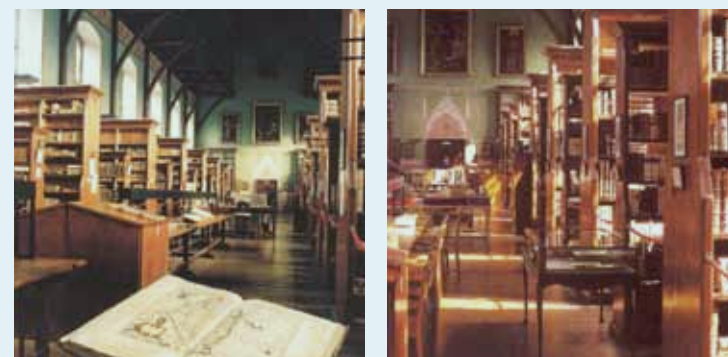
A 21st Century Learning Space

From £100 allocated by the Trustees in 1800, the library at Maynooth has undergone a radical structural and cultural transformation.



Did you know the new library will have...

- Seating capacity of almost 1,500
- More than 200 PCs
- Desks that are fully wired and the entire building will be wireless network enabled
- 6 Fully equipped state-of-the art Group Study Rooms and increased group study space
- Postgraduate and academic staff areas
- Exhibitions area



Laying the original foundation – President Patrick Hillery, April 1982
Russell Library Interior

Did you know?

- In 1984
 - The library had seating for 520 readers
 - Undergraduate and Diploma students could borrow 2 books for two weeks
 - An electronic typewriter was available for student use
 - Books could not be taken out of Ireland without the permission of the Librarian
 - 5 library tickets were issued to students
- The first mention of a library in Maynooth (which was subsequently located in Long Corridor) was in May 1800 when the Trustees resolved 'that one of the large halls be fitted up as a library and a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds be expended thereon.'
- The old library (designed by A.W. Pugin and fully furnished in 1861) was renamed the Russell Library in 1984.
- In 1977 a library in the New Arts Block was opened.
- Many valuable collections have been bequeathed to the University. Edmond Burke donated a collection of Classics books.

€20million has been spent on upgrading the original library, built in 1984 with a focus on space for print collections and traditional, uniform study catering for 2,000 students, to a state of the art learning experience offering eight different ways to study, ranging from social and collaborative to silent and individual which will cater for the 8,000 students currently enrolled at NUI Maynooth.

At more than 10,000 square metres, the new library will be two and a half times larger than the existing library building. 5 km of new shelving will hold the physical collection, while the virtual will be easily accessible via dozens of new computers, enhanced wifi, and touch screens. For really rare items there's a new special collections area, with secure storage for more than 15,000 items. This offers the highest levels of environmental control for these rare and unique items, while creating an atmosphere that is conducive to the needs of researchers.

With more self-service machines and 'business hubs' for printing, copying and scanning on each floor (all fully integrated with the new campus-wide printing service), queuing should become a long and distant memory.

The new library will utilise a range of technology to maximise water retention and refuse and has inbuilt systems to minimise power consumption. While a coffee shop in a library would have been unheard of in 1984, visitors will be able to enjoy a large purpose-built café, with outdoor seating for those balmy summer days to come!

Undoubtedly the Library is a key resource for the University community. Recent years have seen a greater involvement with the local community which will be further strengthened with the new exhibitions area and the library plaza which will serve as a venue for cultural events and performances, both from within the University and the wider community.

Susan Durack who works in Special Collections in the library remembers the original move to the new library in 1984

'My recollection of the move project was the sheer size of the task. No professional movers were involved. The moves from the Russell Library and the Arts Block Library were planned and carried out by library staff with the assistance of students. We used boxes that we referred to as 'coffins' because they were large and black. They were filled with books and slid down the stairs of the Russell Library and brought out for transportation. Our transportation consisted of two library lorries and Professor Martin Pulbrook's 'ambulance' – a world war two ambulance which he drove to and from the Arts Block Library. The move was completed in an estimated three week period and was regularly interspersed with lunches, laughs and liquid refreshments in the evenings in the Roost Bar!'

A note from the Editor...

We will be inviting alumni to an event in the library in the New Year. Keep an eye on alumni-network.nuim.ie for more details.

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