



Leabharlann Chontae Leitrim

75 Bliain ar an Saol

Le Seán ó Suilleabháin

Leitrim County Library - 1931 - 2005



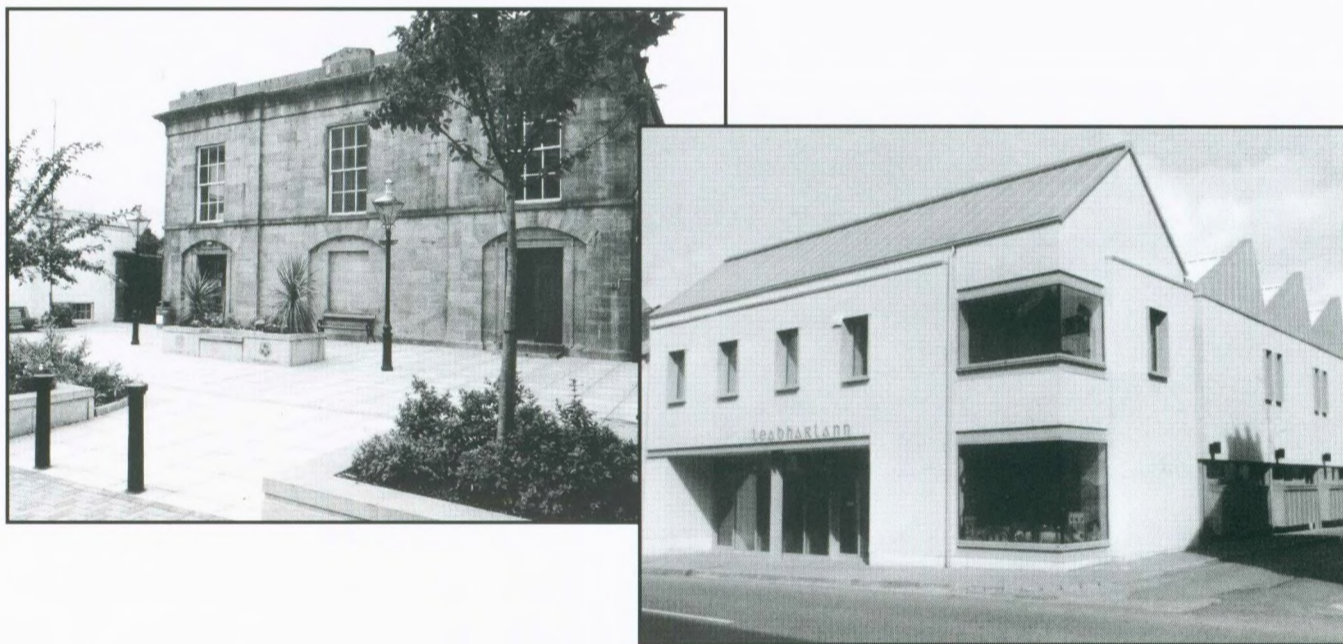


Pictured at the opening of Manorhamilton Library 7 March 2005, L to R: Seán Ó Suilleabháin, Leabharlannai Contae, Senator Paschal Mooney, Chairman, Leirim Library Advisory Committee, Danny McLoughlin, Leirim County Manager, Seán McGowan, Cathaoirleach Comhairle Chontae Liatroma, Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Community and Enterprise, Leirim Co Council, John Ellis TD.

Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma

- 75 Bliain ar an Saol -

Le Seán Ó Suilleabháin



Leitrim County Library

1931 – 2005

*Foilsithe ag Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma i mí Meithimh 2005
ar ócáid oscailt oifigiúil lár-ionad nua do Leabharlann Chontae
Liatroma i mBéal an Átha Móir*

Major Controversy Over Setting Up Of Library in 1931

Leitrim Co Library Service came into being on 19 March 1931. It started with one staff member, the County Librarian, in one small room in the Courthouse in Ballinamore where it continued to operate for 74 years. However, not many people know about the huge controversy that raged throughout the County, and not just among the councillors, about the setting up of the library. It was a hugely contentious issue that filled the front page of the Leitrim Observer on a number of occasions over a fifteen month period from November 1929 until January 1931

Andrew Mooney – The Man who started it all

The man who first introduced the idea of setting up a library service in Leitrim was Councillor Andrew Mooney from Drumshanbo, the father of the late Councillor Joseph M Mooney and grandfather of Senator Paschal Mooney, the current Chairman of Leitrim Co Council's Library Advisory Committee. Andrew Mooney was then a Cumann na nGael Councillor.

County libraries were being set up all over Ireland and by 1929 nineteen of the twenty-six counties had already established library services. Leitrim was the only county in Connacht not to have such a service. The main impetus behind the setting up of libraries was the availability of Carnegie Trust grants. The Carnegie Trust gave grants for the purchase of books, fittings and furniture and it was up to the local authority to provide a premises and staff, which had, of course, to be paid for through the rates. Leitrim was offered a grant of £950 from the Trust, which was a lot of money at that time. Andrew Mooney first handed in a notice of motion to the Council in August 1929, but it did not come up for debate until November 1929.



Andrew Mooney

The Mooney Family and Libraries

Three generations of the Mooney family, Drumshanbo, have had strong connections with the library service. Pictured is Andrew Mooney, who made the initial proposal to set up a library service in Leitrim in 1929. Joseph Mary Mooney, was Chairman of the Library Committee for many years. Senator Paschal Mooney, is the current Chairman of the Library Committee and nominee of the Library Association of Ireland (Cumann Leabharlann na hÉireann) in the Senate

Long Winter Nights in Backward Places

Andrew Mooney had all his facts prepared when he introduced his notice of motion and in regard to the cost on the rates he said ***"the outlay is small in proportion to the benefit which will be derived by the people not alone in towns but on the mountain sides and in most backward places. It would be of especial value to the young people at this time of the year when the winter nights are before them"***



Ballinamore in the 1930s from the railway gates at the bottom of the town.

At this stage Councillor William J Pye from Kinlough retorted, "There are plenty of dances in the country to amuse them". To which Andrew Mooney replied "If we had less dances and more reading material I am sure it would be better and healthier for all concerned. The young people could remain in their homes at their own firesides instead of wandering about the country lanes and bye-ways"

As an indication of things to come Councillor Michael Carter from Keshcarrigan (Chairman and former TD) at one stage said "I think you will have big opposition Mr. Mooney" However, nobody could have envisaged the heat and controversy that would rage over the next year over the setting up of a small library service.

"If we had less dances and more reading material I am sure it would be better and healthier for all concerned."

Councillor Andrew Mooney, Drumshanbo

Bad Books – Seven Hours Per Day on Guard

Councillor Peter Kilkenny NT, who subsequently was a great supporter of the library idea, said at this meeting that he would have brought in such a proposal long ago only for **"he heard that in another county certain members of this Library Committee got in bad books and to prevent that happening again the local clergyman had to devote seven hours at least per day to guard against the introduction of such literature"**

Bags of Flour More Use than Books

The first of many lengthy and serious debates about the library took place at the Council meeting on 4 January 1930. Andrew Mooney gave lengthy arguments in favour and responded to questions, some serious and others either humorous or daft.

"What would the librarian get in salary?" £250 a year was the answer.

"Could it be for one year as an experiment?" asked Councillor John Reilly. No, he was told.

Councillor Pye wanted to know *"what age would this librarian be and when he would have to retire?"*

Pat Kilkenny from Aughavas was having none of it and he said, *"books were alright in their own way but it would be better to give the starving people of the countryside bags of flour than start lumping volumes on them"*

Library for the Price of a Bottle of Stout Yearly

Andrew Mooney played a blinder throughout and stated **"this priceless advantage of the establishing of a public library will be achieved by the expenditure on the average farmer of the price of a bottle of stout yearly"**

In the end a vote was taken and Andrew Mooney's motion was defeated by 12 votes to 9. Those who voted for were: Paddy Reynolds TD Ballinamore (C na G). Councillors Con Reynolds, Tooman (Ind), Andrew Mooney (C na G), Pat Kiernan, Agharan, Aughavas (FF), Peter Kilkenny, Meiltron, Aughavas NT (C na G), Henry McMorrow NT, Dromahair (C na G), John McMorrow, (C na G) John H Dolan (C na G) and William Pye, Kinlough (C na G). Those against were: John Reilly, Aughnasheelin (FF), James Creamer, Ballinamore (FF), Thomas McCartin, (FF), Michael McGrath Carrick on Shannon (FF), Patrick Heslin, Keeldra, Cloone (C na G), Pat Kilkenny Bundarragh, Aughavas (FF), John Feeney (C na G), John Travers, Caddagh, Dromahair (Ind), Owen Dolan, Tullycooly, Dromahair (FF), Patrick McGowan, Kiltyclogher (FF). Stage one in the saga was over and lost. It is interesting to note that while it didn't totally divide on party lines, the bulk of those in favour were from Cumann na nGael and those against were Fianna Fáil

"Books were alright in their own way but it would be better to give the starving people of the countryside bags of flour than start lumping volumes on them"

Councillor Pat Kilkenny, Bundarragh, Aughavas

Library Centres in 1938			
Centre.	Local Librarian.	Centre.	Local Librarian.
An aduff ...	Miss L. Faughnan ...	Drumshanbo ...	Mr. T. Moran ...
Aughacashel ...	Mr. C. Lee ...	Drumsna ...	Mr. C. Healy ...
Aughnasheelin ...	Mr. F. McTeague, N.T.	Glenade ...	Mr. J. Gallagher, N.T.
Aughavas ...	Mr. H. Maguire ...	*Glenfarne ...	Mr. C. Brennan, N.T.
Aughawilshan ...	Mr. M. McTiernan, N.T.	Gortanoso ...	Mr. F. McGovern, N.T.
Ballinamore ...	County Librarian ...	Gortletteragh ...	Mr. J. McKenna, N.T.
Bornacooia ...	Mr. J. Conboy, N.T. ...	Greaghmagullion ...	Miss M. Do'an ...
Carrick-on-Shannon ...	Mr. P. Keany ...	Keshcarrigan ...	Miss K. Rutledge ...
Coluban Club (C.)	Mr. T. J. Lyons ...	Killenummery ...	Mr. P. Gallagher ...
Commercial Club (C)	Mr. P. Hyland ...	Kilnagross ...	Mr. J. Hunt, N.T. ...
Temperance Club (C)	Mr. W. Mulhern ...	Kiltoghert ...	Mr. J. O'Farrell, N.T.
Vocational Schl. (C)	Miss Kerrigan, B.Com.	Liscarbin ...	Mr. T. Doherty ...
Carrigallen ...	Miss E. Smyth ...	Lisnagroagh ...	Mr. J. McDermott ...
Carrigallen F.F. Club	Mr. W. Maguire, N.T.	Manorhamilton ...	Mrs. McGrath, N.T. ...
Carton ...	Mr. J. Flynn, N.T. ...	Vocational Schl. (M)	Mr. T. O'Roarty ...
Cloone ...	Mr. P. McAweeney, N.T.	Marist Convent ...	Sr. M. Gregory, B.Sc. ...
Corderay ...	Mr. J. Kelleher, N.T. ...	Mohill ...	Mr. F. Flynn, N.T. ...
Cornagun ...	Mr. F. Heeran, N.T. ...	*Mohill Boys' Schl. ...	Mr. F. Flynn, N.T. ...
Crummy ...	Mr. P. Redihan, N.T. ...	Mohill Convent ...	Sr. M. Michael ...
Dowra ...	Mrs. J. Flynn, N.T. ...	*Mohill Voc. Schl. ...	Mr. Peyton ...
Dromahair ...	Mr. P. Downey, N.T. ...	Rossan ...	Mr. P. Quinn ...
Drunod ...	Mr. T. Boyle ...	Rossinver ...	Mr. P. McSharry ...
Drumany ...	Mr. P. Reynolds, N.T. ...	Stracarne ...	Mr. F. McGuinness, N.T.
Drumdiffer ...	Mrs. Carey, N.T. ...	*Tawnyinshinnagh ...	Mr. P. Rougheen, N.T.
Drumkeeran ...	Miss A. Regan, N.T. ...		
Vocational Schl. (D.)	Mr. S. Duignan, B.A. ...		TOTALS ...

This is a list of library centres in Leitrim in 1938. Most of them were located in schools.

Mooney tries Again

Andrew Mooney didn't take no for an answer and when the next Council meeting took place three weeks later on 25 January 1930 he raised the matter again. He said that "owing to the late hour at which the subject was reached when they last assembled and the fact that several of the members were unavoidably absent the subject did not receive the consideration it should"

Councillor James Creamer from Castleroggy, Ballinamore was death against it. He said ***"it is all very well to be talking about literature but if those who advocate it had to go into a gripe or a ditch to earn their living it would be another matter, Shopkeepers who have an easy way of making money, and others who are gorged with big salaries, may be in favour of it, but I say it is an outrage and intolerable on the ratepayers to bring it forward now"***

There were fairly bitter exchanges then between Mooney and Creamer.

"Where did the people outside your district come from who asked you to support this" asked James Creamer.

"From Ballinamore for they knew they had no business going to Mr. Creamer", replied Andrew Mooney amidst laughter from the gallery.

"No one came down to see you from the top of Gortnawane about this library" said Creamer to further laughter.

"I think all who are conversant with this subject know that the library will serve about two dozen people in the County Leitrim, " said Councillor Michael McGrath

Where Will the Librarian be from?

It was at this meeting that the issue, which brought the Council into national controversy, was first introduced. That was the question of where the Librarian would be from? Councillor John Reilly from Drumdarton, Aughnasheelin, who opposed the library at the previous meeting, said he was now changing his mind but added, "We should see also that the Librarian to be appointed should be a resident of Leitrim or of Leitrim parentage"

When the vote was taken the motion was passed by 12 votes to 7, but, ominously, a clause was added favouring the appointment of a Leitrim candidate, if qualified.

The difficulty was that then, as now, the Local Appointments Commission in Dublin filled such appointments and candidates could come from anywhere.

At any rate Andrew Mooney's motion was through, but was it?

"It is all very well to be talking about literature but if those who advocate it had to go into a gripe or a ditch to earn their living it would be another matter".

Councillor James Creamer, Ballinamore

Uproar in Carrigallen!!

Three weeks later at the next Council meeting the whole issue was opened again. Councillor Pat Kilkenny from Aughavas was up in arms. Like Councillor Mooney three weeks earlier, he claimed there was not a full attendance when the previous vote was taken. This time there was an overflow attendance in the gallery including a deputation of ratepayers from Carrigallen.

The Leitrim Observer of 22 February 1930 devoted a full page to reporting the issue. Pat Kilkenny talked about the destitution that prevailed in Leitrim and that he saw a cess (rate) collector take a poor man's hay "on the spread", a man who hadn't a meal in his house or the price of one. There were roars of "Up Kilkenny" from the gallery as he spoke. Michael McGrath seconded Kilkenny's motion and said, "I have a mandate from those who elected me to get this Library knocked out. It is only suitable for the man who has five or six hundred pounds a year, who, after a good dinner, took up one of those books, had a rest, and went asleep" (laughter).

It was a stormy meeting with those in the gallery butting in. Andrew Mooney spoke in favour of the library again and opposed Kilkenny's motion. When the vote was taken it was 13 in favour of the library and 11 against. There were loud cheers and counter-cheers as the result was announced and it was decided to put the Act into force immediately.

"It (the Library) is only suitable for the man who has five or six hundred pounds a year, who, after a good dinner, took up one of those books, had a rest, and went asleep"

Councillor Michael McGrath, Carrick on Shannon.

LEABHARLANN CONNDAE LIATHDROMA
(Leitrim County Library).

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR LOCAL CENTRES.

Date... *29/11/41*

WE, the undersigned, on behalf of the
Slievenakilla District of Ballinaglera.

hereby apply to the Leitrim County Library Committee for permission to form
a centre for book distribution at *Slievenakilla N. School.*

We undertake to provide free of cost suitable accommodation for the books, to
lend them without charge, to return them promptly and in good condition, and
to abide by all the rules and regulations drawn up by the County Library
Committee.

Peadar S. Clancy is designated to act as Local
Librarian, and is authorised to represent us in dealing with the Library
Committee.

(Signed) *William Dalton* Chairman.
Peadar S. Clancy Secretary.

Railway Station to which boxes are to be consigned *Linnishanto.*

Nearest Post Office *Ballinaglera.*

To set up a local centre one had to make application to the Co Librarian. This is an application made in 1941 by Peadar S Clancy for a centre in Slievenakilla National School in Ballinaglera.

Filling the County Librarian Post

Almost a year passed, relatively quietly, and the Local Appointments Commission set about filling the post. They failed to fill the post when it was first advertised and at the second attempt they recommended their chosen candidate, Kathleen M White from Portlaoise. All Hell broke loose when the news reached Leitrim in September 1930. The matter of the appointment was adjourned for the moment but the Council did ask the Carnegie Trust to send on the £950.



Paddy Reynolds T.D.

Ballinamore to be the HQ

It was also decided at a meeting during 1930 to have the Central Library in the Courthouse in Ballinamore, on the proposal of Paddy Reynolds TD. (Over a year later, in February 1932, Paddy Reynolds was shot dead near Fenagh). Ballinamore Courthouse had been burned during the War of Independence and was rebuilt and restored by John Joe Doherty of Fenagh in the late 1920s.

Paddy Reynolds T D was responsible for getting the County Library located in Ballinamore. In 1930, he proposed that the library be located in the newly restored Courthouse in Ballinamore. Leitrim is one of the few counties where the Co Library is not located in the county town. Paddy Reynolds' son Pat Joe Reynolds and his grandson Gerard Reynolds have both been members of the Library Committee at different times.

March from Gowel and Jamestown – Headed by two Pipe Bands

The place was packed when the Council assembled for its meeting on Saturday 3 January 1931. Several hundred ratepayers from Gowel and Jamestown, headed by two pipe bands, marched to the Council Chamber to register their protest. Bad enough to accept the setting up of the Library but now, the job going to a non-Leitrim person, that was the last straw.

Dominic S Duignan from Kiltycarney, Carrick-on-Shannon led a deputation from the parishes of Kiltoghert, Kiltubrid and part of the parish of Drumshanbo. When he spoke he lambasted the Appointments Commission and wondered, "Where were those wonderful fellows at the time of stress and danger in the days of Seán McDermott, whose blood splashed the walls of Kilmainham, but now they would not be allowed to appoint a miserable librarian. Was it fair to the people of Leitrim who played such a heroic part in the struggle that they should be treated in such a manner, and instead of getting that freedom they fought for that they should be dragooned by a band of bureaucrats and a more dangerous enemy of democracy than ever the English were, as bad as they were"

The most dramatic development at this meeting was that Andrew Mooney, who championed the library proposal for the previous year and more, now changed his mind. He said that he thought someone in Leitrim would be found qualified for the post and that would be the means of keeping one person at least from emigrating to America. And so the man who sponsored all the earlier motions in favour of the library now moved the motion for its rejection.

It should be said that another dramatic development in Mayo in 1930, involving the Appointments Commission and the appointment of a Co Librarian, had a bearing on the Council's decision. In Mayo, the candidate recommended by the Local Appointments Commission was a Protestant lady, Letitia Dunbar, and the Council refused to accept the appointment. As a result the Council was abolished and a Commissioner was appointed in place of the Council.

When the Chairman, Michael Carter from Kiltubrid, called for a vote, Andrew Mooney's motion to scrap the library was accepted almost unanimously amid wild scenes of enthusiasm and, for the moment, the library idea was dead. The meeting finished at a late hour and the bands, having reformed outside the Courthouse on a cold January night, struck up Auld Lang Syne.

*"Where were those wonderful fellows (the Local Appointments Commission)
at the time of stress and danger in the days of Seán McDermott,
whose blood splashed the walls of Kilmainham, but now they (Leitrim Co
Council) would not be allowed to appoint a miserable Librarian"*

Dominic Duignan, Carrick on Shannon.

Níl sé críochnaithe fós

The drama wasn't over yet. The Leitrim Observer of 31 January 1931 devoted the whole front page and half of another one to the dramatic special Council meeting of Saturday 24 January which had just one item on the agenda – the letter from the Secretary of the Dept of Local Government and Public Health which made it clear the Council would be abolished if they did not accept the recommendation of the Local Appointments Commission.

Andrew Mooney bore the brunt of it.

"You have led us into this corner, and get us out of it" shouted Bernard Connolly (FF) at Andrew Mooney.

Councillor Mooney suggested re-adopting the Libraries Act and appoint Miss White *"for a time"* He added by saying that, *"In three months time they could pay the lady three months salary and be finished"*

"Put her cleaning the Courthouse and it will save us £80 a year or more," said James Creamer.

At the end of a long meeting Paddy Reynolds proposed and Peter Kilkenny seconded a motion that the Council appoint the Librarian and that the Libraries Act be put into operation. The vote was; 14 for, 7 against and 6 abstained, including Andrew Mooney. That was that, and so after almost eighteen months of controversy and debate the die was finally cast.

*"Put her (the new Co Librarian) cleaning the Courthouse
and it will save us £80 a year or more"*

Councillor James Creamer, Ballinacree

First County Librarian – Kathleen White Arrives

Kathleen M White arrived from Portlaoise in March 1931 to take up her appointment. When interviewed in November 1981 Kathleen White (then Kathleen Delaney) described how she came on the train to Ballinamore, a place she had never heard of before. She stayed for a week in Hyland's Hotel (where Commercial Hotel is now) and then stayed with Florrie Price in Main St.

She had been allocated one room upstairs in the Courthouse in Ballinamore. It was a room of 275sq feet with three big windows at the back of the Courthouse and here was her branch library, headquarters and office all rolled into one. This building was to house the County Library for the next 74 years until the opening of the new Co Library Headquarters in 2005

Kathleen M White

**Leitrim County Librarian
1931 - 1936**

Leitrim's first Co Librarian, Kathleen M White (right), was born in Portlaoise in 1901. She was educated at the Ursuline Convent in Waterford and in UCD. She had previously worked from 1926 in Laois Co Library. She worked in Leitrim for five years until she retired on 1 June 1936 prior to her marriage to Charles Delaney. She returned to live in Portlaoise. She died in Dublin on 21 May 1985. Her son, Fr Denis Delaney, is a Priest in the Dublin Diocese.



Beginnings of Co Library

In the 1930s library service was provided through what were called Centres. A Centre would very often be in a school or a Post Office and would be operated on a voluntary basis by a teacher or some other volunteer. There were no branch libraries, as we know them today, with paid staff, until the 1950s

By November 1931, seventeen centres had been established throughout the County and, by the time Kathleen White retired in 1935 there were 54 centres operating. Books were brought to those centres by car, train and bus. When interviewed, Kathleen White described how at one location she used to be met by two boys with an ass and par dogs who used to take books to a remote mountain school. The very first centre in the county was established in Kinlough.

Committees, Committees and Committees

No less than three committees were set up to look after the library service, which, as yet, was run by just the one person. There was a Library Committee, which, according to Kathleen White, initially had 75 members. There was also a Finance Committee and a Book Selection Committee.

The first meeting of the Library Committee was held in Ballinamore on Saturday 21 March 1931. Paddy Reynolds TD was elected Chairman and Michael McGrath from Carrick on Shannon, one of those bitterly opposed to the library earlier, was elected Vice Chairman. It should be said that once the library was established, it was never questioned again and Kathleen White acknowledged that she got the height of co-operation from everyone on the Council.

From Kiltyclogher By Bicycle

One member of the Committee, who attended Library Committee meetings regularly in Ballinamore, was Councillor Paddy McGowan from Kiltyclogher and he came all the way by bicycle. That was a round trip of at least 70 miles. What is ironic about it is that Patrick McGowan also voted against the setting up of the Library in 1931 but he became one of its greatest supporters afterwards.

County Library Committee 1935

In 1935, the Library Committee had 52 members. The following are their names

William Mulhern, Carrick-on-Shannon
B.B. Connolly, Aghavoghil, Buckode, Kinlough
John Joe McGarry, Co.Co. Drumhass, Mohill.
Father Lynch, C.C., Drumcong
Andrew Mooney, Co.Co. Drumshanbo
John Kenny, N. T. Glenfarne
Joe Maguire, N.T. Manorhamilton
Joseph McKenna, N.T. Gortletteragh N.S., Mohill
Francis Sweeney, G. S. Railway, Ballinamore
Very Revd Canon Gray, P.P. Bornacoola, Dromod
Con Reynolds, Co. Co., Tooman, Dromod
Frank Dolan, Riversdale, Mohill
Felix Canning, Mohill
James Lavin, Leitrim.
John Dunleavy, Mohill
Charles Gallagher, Drumkeeran
Michael Guihan, Drumkeeran
B.A. Cryan, Ballinamore
Joseph Cafferty, Ballinamore
Patrick Rowley, Ballinamore
Owen Dolan, Co. Co. Dromahair
P. McGowan, Co.Co. Kiltyclogher
Revd P.J. Brady, C.C. Kiltyclogher
Thomas McLoughlin, Main St., Ballinamore
Rev. A. Sweetman, Rector, Fenagh, Foxfield,
Revd J. F. McKeon, P.P. Dromahair
Revd J. Rynn, C.C. Kinlough

Revd J. Butler, C.C. Drumshanbo. **Vice-Chairman**
Revd B.C. Maguire, C.C. Aughawillan
Revd Fr Goodwin, C.C. Dromod
John Bohan, N.T., P.C., Johnston's Bridge, Dromod
Brian Gilgun, Manorhamilton
Denis Drumm, Manorhamilton
Revd F. McCabe, C.C. Cloone
Patrick Heslin, Co. Co. Cloone
J. McGuire, Ex-N.T., Carrigallen
John O'Rourke, Ex-N.T., Breffni Hse., Carrigallen
Thos P. Cox, N.T., Dromod
Mrs McLoughlin, Main St., Ballinamore
Hugh McGuire, Co. Co. Kinlough
J. Flynn, T.D., Co. Co. Corry, Carrick-on-Shannon
Michael McGrath, Co. Co., Carrick-on-Shannon
Revd Peter Conefrey, P.P. Cloone
Revd T. Meehan, C.C. Aughavas
Patrick Kiernan, Co. Co. Aughavas
Hugh Duffy, Co. Co. Carrigallen
Phil Gaffney, Co. Co. Ballinamore
John Reilly, Co. Co. Drumdarton, Ballinamore
John Gaffney, Railway Terrace, Ballinamore
Revd P. Brady, C.C. Ballinamore. **Chairman**
Sean O'Farrell, Drumard, Dromod
Edward Cafferty, Ballinamore

Keeping Bad Books Out

Which books were selected was all-important in those days, as the notion of "Bad Books" was all the rage. A strong committee had to be got together and all the books had to be read before they could hit the library shelves. The first selection committee was agreed at the meeting of 31 March 1931 and it included:

Canon Masterson PP, Mohill
Fr O'Farrell CC Carrick-on-Shannon
John Bohan NT, Johnston's Bridge
Fr Glancy PP Fenagh
Paddy Reynolds TD Ballinamore
Councillor Michael McGrath, Carrick-on-Shannon
Peter Kilkenny NT, Aughavas
Councillor John Travers, Dromahair
Henry McMorrow NT, Dromahair
Ben J Maguire, TD
Councillor Andrew Mooney, Drumshanbo

Others were added later including Dr Dolan, Ballinamore, Rev Sweetman, Rector, Fenagh and Peter Caning, Solicitor, Ballinamore

Supporting the Pope

The Library Committee had the welfare of the Pope in mind, it seems, because the following resolution, proposed by Dr Dolan and seconded by Paddy Reynolds TD was passed in June 1931.

That we, the Leitrim County Library Committee, hereby tender to His Holiness our sympathy in the trials to which he has been subjected by the recent occurrences in Italy and we pledge our unswerving loyalty and devotion to him and his efforts in the interests of the Catholic Church throughout the world. We direct that this resolution be forwarded to His Excellency Monsignor Paschal Robinson, Papal Nuncio.

The Pope was having trouble with Mussolini who had banned some Catholic Youth organizations at the time.

The Pope Responds

It isn't often the Pope writes to someone in Ballinamore but he did, it seems, in 1931. Kathleen White, Co Librarian, informed a Co Council meeting in November 1931 that she had a letter from the Bishop stating that the Holy Father sent his blessing to the members of the Library Committee.

Library Seal or Book Plate

Libraries used to have a distinguishing Seal which they put on each book. It was a practice that probably originated in the libraries of the Big Houses. Leitrim Co Library's Book Selection Committee decided that they would like to have Fenagh Abbey as the seal for their book plate.



Book No. 13313

RULES.

1. Readers are requested to take great care of the books while in their possession, and to report to the Local Librarian any defects that they may notice.
2. All books must be returned to the Library within fourteen days from the date of issue, but an extension of the period of loan will be granted when desired.
3. Borrowers will not be allowed more than one volume at the same time.
4. Books damaged or lost must be replaced by the borrower, or the cost refunded to the Committee.
5. The Leitrim County Library Committee invite the co-operation of those who use the Library and all suggestions will receive careful consideration.
6. Circulation of books must cease in any district, or to any individual, if there is danger of infection.

Here can be seen the book plate with Fenagh Abbey and also the additional rule which warned about the spread of infectious diseases.

Assistant Librarian Appointed – But No Jazzing

For the first four years of its existence, the Co Library service had just one person on the staff. Kathleen White bought the books, catalogued them, distributed them to up to 50 centres throughout the county and she also operated the branch in Ballinamore which opened on Wednesdays and Saturdays. In July 1935 Veronica Carey took up a position as Assistant Librarian. Discussion on the need for such an appointment had gone on for years. However, there was an unusual condition attached to the appointment. There was to be no additional charge on the rates and "in the event of the appointment requiring an addition to the rate at any time the position would be abolished"

At the Council discussion on the matter, Co Librarian, Kathleen White pointed out that the salary would be £1 – 10s per week. Councillor Henry McMorrow replied, "She cannot jazz very much on £1 – 10s weekly". Jazz or no jazz, Veronica Carey, later to become Veronica or Vera McCarthy become Co Librarian within a year and was to work in that position for almost 40 years.

Veronica Carey

(Later McCarthy)

**Leitrim Co Librarian
1936 – 1974**

Veronica Carey (right) was born at Mullinameela, Fenagh, Co Leitrim in 1911. She was educated at Marist Convent, Carrick on Shannon and at UCD, where she obtained a BA, H Dip in Ed and a Diploma in Library Training. She took up a post as assistant to the County Librarian with Leitrim Co Library on 1 July 1935. A year later, in 1936, she replaced Kathleen M White as Co Librarian. At twenty-five years of age she was one of the youngest Co Librarians ever appointed. She resigned on marriage in 1940 but continued acting in the position and she was reappointed as Co Librarian in June 1941. She retired from the position on 31 December 1974.



Veronica Carey Becomes County Librarian

On 1 June 1936, Kathleen M White resigned as Co Librarian. She was due to get married to Charles Delaney and at that time any girl working in the public service who got married was obliged to retire on marriage.

Veronica Carey, who already worked as an assistant to Kathleen White, was a qualified librarian having received a Diploma in Library Training from UCD in 1935 and she had a number of other qualifications as well. She applied for the Co Librarian post and was recommended by the Local Appointments Commission in 1936 and her appointment was readily ratified by Leitrim Co Council.

For the next 38 years, Veronica Carey (later Veronica McCarthy) was in charge of the library service in Leitrim.

During this period the number of properly equipped branch libraries with paid staff increased. By 1974, when Vera McCarthy retired there were seven branch libraries: Ballinamore, Carrick on Shannon, Manorhamilton, Mohill, Drumshanbo, Kinlough and Carrigallen. Correspondingly, the number of centres, or voluntarily operated branches declined.

Marriage Bar Creates Big Controversy

If the setting up of the Library created huge controversy in 1930-1931, another big controversy surrounded the reappointment of Vera Carey, after her marriage. The position was that in the public service, a female who got married had to resign her position. This was in fact the position until the early 1970s.

In 1940 Vera Carey got married and submitted her resignation, as she was required to do. She was reappointed in a temporary capacity until the post would be filled. Vera had a brother Paddy, a solicitor, and he noticed that while the legislation required a female to resign on marriage there was no stipulation to say that a married woman could not apply for the post. Vera McCarthy, as she was by then, applied for her old post again and was recommended for re-appointment by the Local Appointments Commission on 12 June 1941. Bhí raic eile tosnaithe. At national level there was acute embarrassment that a loophole had been discovered in the legislation and a flurry of activity to stop this happening again.

The impact at local level was also severe because the Co Council was divided on her reappointment. There was a rival candidate from Ballinamore who had the support of some of the local councillors. The IRA still had a big say in events in Leitrim and on this one they were divided. Paddy Carey, Vera's brother, who subsequently stood in a Dáil election an independent republican, was well respected in republican circles. The father of one of the other candidates was the local medical doctor and had been the IRAs medical officer.

Council Debate Appointment

A special meeting of Leitrim Co Council was called for 21 June 1941 to debate the issue. Stephen Flynn TD was Chairman. The Co Secretary outlined how Mrs. McCarthy had been recommended by the Local Appointments Commission and Councillor Henry McMorrow, who had also been there in 1931, proposed that she be appointed. Councillor James Holohan from Drumreilly seconded. Councillor Phil Gaffney, from Aghaleague, Ballinamore opposed the appointment. He said, "I propose we do not make the appointment. As far as I understand the job is for a single



Mick Clyne was the man who lit the fires in the offices of the Co Library until the early 1980s. The Courthouse was also the starting point for Council outdoor workers. L to R: Mick Clyne, Danny McGoohan, Tom Pat McGovern.



A local museum was established in the Co Library in the 1982. A large collection of museum items are in storage but because of shortage of space the museum is no longer open to the public.

Pictured at the opening of the museum in August 1982 are: Councillor Farrell McElgunn, Fr Terry McManus, PP Ballinamore, Councillor Tony Ferguson, Councillor John Joe McGirl.

person and the minister said that himself if you read his letter". Councillor Francis Bohan seconded Phil Gaffney's proposal.

Interestingly, the divide was not on political lines as both James Holohan and Francis Bohan were from the United Ireland Party (an anglicized way of saying Fine Gael), Henry McMorrow was now independent and Phil Gaffney was Fianna Fail.

After much debate and advice from the Council's solicitor, Cathal Flynn, a vote was taken and it was nine to two with only Gaffney and Bohan voting against the appointment.

Thus history was created, a married woman would beat the system, but soon the system was changed to prevent any further married women getting public service jobs.

Books burned by Co Librarian

From the 1930s to the 1950s the issue of unsuitable books was ever present. For example, in her Annual report for the year ended 31 March 1940, Co Librarian, Vera Carey, reported:

*"During the past year 64 books were disposed of as being unsuitable for general circulation. This figure represents a two-year period. Two were forwarded to the Censorship Board as being particularly objectionable, **17 were burned by the Librarian**, and the remainder was returned to the various booksellers from whom they were purchased and replaced by new ones".*

Heil Hitler! – Popular Books in 1939

In her annual report in March 1940, Vera Carey reported that the most popular books in the non-fiction area were: "Insanity fair", "Disgrace Abounding", "Mein Kampf", "Broken Pledges" and "I knew Hitler".

Popular books of Irish interest were "The Old Munster Circuit", "Paddy the Cope", "Last Invasion of Ireland" and "Willie Reilly and his Colleen Bawn".

Easpa Spáis - Problem of Space

When the Co Library opened in 1931 it was allocated just one room in the Courthouse in Ballinamore. This room which measured 23ft X 12ft was located at the rear top right of the building, upstairs. It functioned as the branch library and headquarters. Initially members of the public asked for what they wanted but they did not have direct access to any books. Later some shelves



In the early 1970s the Co Library was greatly in need of additional space. This photo from the Leitrim Observer in 1972 shows the dire situation with Rosaleen Conefrey (top of heap), Mary Corby and Eamon Walsh trying to sort it out.

were opened to the public. However it is difficult to imagine how a librarian, working on her own could cope with serving 50 centres, deal with new books and also have a branch library open to the public in an area of 275 sq ft.

In May 1948 (Leitrim Observer 28/5/1949) Vera McCarthy got use of what had previously been the Jury Room and this became the branch library and remained so until the public area moved downstairs to the court lobby in April 1980.

Two further rooms to the front of the building were obtained in November 1955 when the Medical Officer of Health moved to Carrick. The Caretakers quarters became available in the early 1970s and these were shelved for storage space and the last remaining rooms, including the Judges Room were commandeered in the 1980s.

Paying the Local Librarians

The people who operated branch libraries, or centres, as they were called, were not paid for their work, they were all volunteers. The first change came in 1948, when a fairly unusual move was agreed with the Co Manager. A registration charge of 2/- (Two shillings) per annum was introduced for the first time and a fines system for overdue books was introduced. What was unusual was that the local librarian was allowed keep the money collected as a sort of payment for operating the library. The amount of money collected did not make any of the librarians rich but the charge did lead to a considerable fall in the numbers using the library.

Branch Libraries with Paid Staff

The first fully equipped Branch Library, apart from Ballinamore, was opened in the Town Hall in Carrick on Shannon in 1955. Soon Manorhamilton was to follow with a Branch Library in the Courthouse. Next came Mohill with a library in the Canon Donohoe Hall, which opened in September 1958, and Drumshanbo was opened in the Courthouse in the late 1950s.

No Libraries in Pubs!

Before the days of the properly established branch library, voluntary operated centres were in all sorts of premises, schools, halls, shops, private houses and even pubs. In November 1950 Co. Librarian, Mrs. Vera McCarthy wrote to T Moran, Drumshanbo to say "I have been instructed by my authorities that I am not to have branch libraries in Licensed Premises. Therefore I would be grateful if you would call in all books, and I will collect them on Thursday December 14". So that was the end of the "Pub-Library".

Fear of TB

The spread of infectious disease was a big worry in the 1930s and 1940s and there was a belief that books borrowed from a library could be a means of spreading infection. Mrs. McCarthy recalled that a Co Councillor speaking before an election at Foxfield Church said that the Co Library should be burned, as it was responsible for spreading disease throughout the County.

An additional lending rule was added to the front of books, which stated, "Circulation of books must cease in any district, or to any individual, if there is a danger of infection".



Opening of Carrick on Shannon Library

Pictured at opening of Carrick on Shannon Library in June 1984:

Back Row L to R: Tom Bredin, Paddy Gallagher, Leo Reynolds, Josie Martin, Canon Terry McManus, Paddy Briody,
Fr John A Young, Farrell McElgunn, Seán Ó Suilleabháin, Tony Ferguson, Jim Joe Shortt,
Front: Mickie Kilraine, Ena Fox, Annie Cox, Mary Corby, Mary Bohan, Paddy Doyle, Co Manager, Hilda King, Joe Mooney

Population Decline

In 2002 we had a very welcome population increase but it is worth noting that in 1931 when the library service was set up the population of the County was near 55,000. (The previous Census was in 1926 and gave the population at 55,907). The current population at 25,700 is less than half that of 1926.

Schools Service

A major new development during those years was the schools service. The beginnings of a school service occurred in the 1960s when the Dept of Education provided a standard set of books for each school in the country. By the early 1970s Leitrim had a schools van with a driver and an assistant. This van visited the 120 national schools that were then in the county. The number of school dropped dramatically in the 1970s with central schools being built in most parishes. By the end of the 1970s there were just over 40 national schools in the county.

There were a number of drivers of the library van but for most teachers and pupils in schools throughout the county the man they will remember most is the late Aidan Nangle. Aidan was a legendary figure due to his involvement in Rowing in particular. He coached Frances Cryan to reach and compete in the Moscow Olympics of 1980. This was the crowning glory of Aidan's work for Rowing. Aidan drove the van until his retirement in May 1988. Unfortunately, due to cut-backs at that time the schools book exchange service ceased on his retirement and was never restored.

Acting Co Librarian Rosaleen Kielty

Veronica McCarthy retired as Co Librarian on 31 December 1974. Rosaleen Kielty (Conefrey) was Acting Co Librarian for the next three and a half years until the current Co Librarian, Sean Ó Suilleabháin, was appointed. During this period a number of significant developments took place including the opening of new branches in Kiltyclogher and Dromahair. For a short period in 1978, Breda Heraty, from Sligo Co Library, was acting Co Librarian



Rosaleen Kielty, who was acting Co Librarian from 1975-1977, pictured with Sean Ó Suilleabháin and Joe Mooney

Seán Ó Suilleabháin – Third Leitrim Co Librarian

Seán Ó Suilleabháin took up duty as Co Librarian on 1 August 1978. A native of Aughakine, Aughnacliffe, Co Longford, he had previously worked in Dublin City Libraries.

Difficult Times – 1987

The 1980s were very difficult times for public libraries and for public services generally. Money was scarce, cut backs were common and rock bottom was reached at the end of 1987. As estimates were being prepared for 1988 a number of cut back measures were agreed;

- No money for books
- Closing of Carrigallen and Kiltyclogher Libraries
- Closing of all branches for 2 months during the summer (except Ballinamore)
- Introduce borrowing charges of 50 pence for an adult book and 10 pence for a Child's book.

None of these measures was very welcome, but the one which devastated the library service was the introduction of charges. Use of libraries dropped by 70% in the first three months. Then the adult charge was reduced to 20 pence per book. Annual book issues didn't return to the pre-charges level for 15 years. The libraries that closed down in Carrigallen and Kiltyclogher in 1988 were eventually replaced with new libraries in 2002 and 2004 respectively.

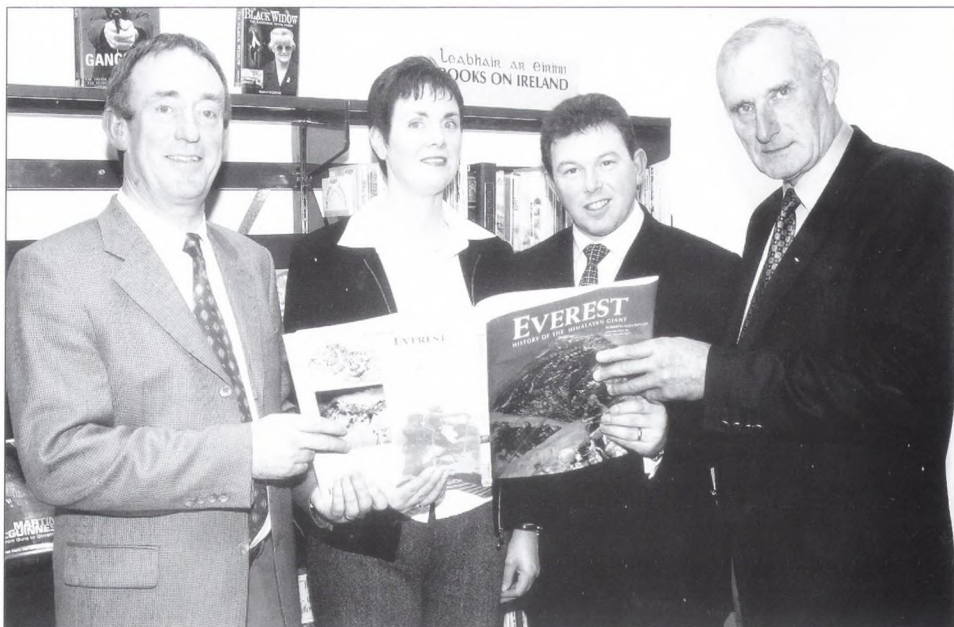
Developments in the 1980s and 1990s

A lot of developments took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The location of the branches in Manorhamilton, Mohill, Drumshanbo and Carrick on Shannon all changed, as well as Ballinamore being re-located within the Courthouse. Other developments included the starting of a museum in Ballinamore and the setting up of Leitrim Genealogy Centre.



Kiltyclogher Branch Opening

Kiltyclogher library, funded by the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, opened on 1 June 2004. Pictured at the opening are:
 Front, L to R: Gabrielle Flynn, Orla Parkinson, Branch Librarian, Kiltyclogher, Mary Corby, Anna McKiernan, Caroline McCartin.
 Back: Veronica McKeon, Sean Ó Suilleabháin, Teresa Kelly, Mae Kelly, Marian Mulvey, Breda Sweeney, Michael Colreavy, Hilda King, Eileen Mullanny, Sean McDermott, Helen Corcoran.



Carrigallen Library Opening

Carrigallen Library opened in October 2002. Photograph on opening day shows: Sean Ó Suilleabháin, Helen Corcoran, Branch Librarian, Carrigallen, Danny McLoughlin, Co Manager, Jim Joe Shortt, Cathaoirleach, Leitrim Co Council

Local Studies - Stair Aitiúil

Leitrim has probably one of the best-developed local studies collections in Ireland. FAS schemes have contributed greatly to the collection and indexing of local studies material. Oral history has been collected on a wide scale, newspapers have been indexed for all of the 19th century and much other material has been collected and indexed.

2000 ar aghaidh – Forbairt an Mhór

The past few years have seen major developments in Libraries in Leitrim. Leitrim became one of the first counties to complete the computerization of their entire circulation system in 2003. New branch libraries were opened in Carrigallen in 2002 and in Kiltyclogher in 2004. The new Manorhamilton library opened to the public in December 2004 and the biggest project of all was Ballinamore Headquarters and Branch Library which opened in May 2005.

Pursuit of new Headquarters

The idea of developing a new library headquarters in Ballinamore has been on and off the agenda for a long number of years. From time to time suggestions were made about moving the Co Library to Carrick on Shannon, but these were never seriously considered.

The first plans for a new headquarters were first made in 1986. For the next fourteen years the intention was to proceed with a development on the Courthouse site in Ballinamore. Four different plans were submitted to An Chomhairle Leabharlanna over a fourteen year period. All failed on different grounds; court opposition, heritage reports, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna objections, or simply inadequate space all led to the shelving of those plans. When the final plan was rejected in 2000, the quest for a new site started. While John Tiernan was Co Manager, purchase of a site from James McWeeney was agreed.



New County Library Headquarters & Ballinamore Branch Library.



Manorhamilton Library opened on 7 March 2005. This picture shows library staff from libraries throughout Leitrim.

- Front: Martina Feeney, Teresa Kelly (both Manorhamilton), Veronica McKeon, Gabrielle Flynn and Mary Corby (all Ballinamore), Evelyn Kelly (Mohill).
 Back: Orla Parkinson (Killyclogher), Sean Ó Súilleabháin, Hilda King, Mary Bohan and Mary Conefrey (all Ballinamore), Fiona Gilroy and Mary McGowan (Kinlough), Mae Kelly (formerly Manorhamilton), Breda Sweeney (Dromahair)

Gaeilge

Ó bhunaíodh an leabharlann i 1931, bhí béim ar an nGaeilge agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge. Bhí réimse leathan leabhar i nGaeilge ins na leabharlanna ón tús. Chomh maith leis sin, bhí an spéis ag na Leabharlannaí Contae go léir a bhí sa phost sa teanga. Sin nós atá á leanacht go fóill i Leabharlann Chontae Liatroma.

Buíochas

75 years of library development has been achieved through the hard work of staff, Co Councillors and Council Officials. In 2005 this work is overseen by Joseph Gilhooly, Director of Services, Community and Enterprise and by Co Manager, Danny McLoughlin. The scale of developments over the recent few years is greatly attributable to their interest in developing the Library Service. The Library Advisory Committee and in particular its Chairman, Senator Paschal Mooney, have also maintained a continuing interest in the development of the library service.



Promotional Events

Bringing youngsters in is a big part of the librarian's work. This group came for Children's activity week in Ballinamore library in May 1988:

- Front L to R: Kieran McDermott, ? Ruane, Caoife Armstrong, Olive Sharpley, Linda Harte, Arlene McFarland, Linda McGowan, Ruairí Ó Suilleabháin.
- Second Row: Laura Gilheaney, Louise Martin, Claire Sharpley, Claire McIntyre, Claire Dolan, Mary Ferguson, Emer Gillen, Ruth McLoughlin, Lynette Creamer.
- 3rd Row: Alan Prior, Mark Dolan, Brian Cafferty, Paul McLoughlin, Edel McKeon.
- Back Row: Patricia Gilheaney, Fuzzy Bear (Mary Corby), Gabrielle Flynn, Seán Ó Suilleabháin.

Branch Libraries

Carrick on Shannon

The first fully operational branch library in the town was opened in the Town Hall in 1955. Various plans for a new library were considered and, in the early 1980s a site was obtained beside the new Fire Station, now a car park. The plan reached design stage but was abandoned when the new Park Lane House became available. The Library here was opened in July 1984 and has remained there ever since. Staff since 1955 included Patricia Harman, Mary Butler, Hilda King and the current staff: Mary Gannon and Anna McKiernan

Drumshanbo – First Grant-aided Library in Leitrim

The first branch library was opened in the Courthouse in the late 1950s. Librarians included Brid Duggan (Gray) N.T. Mamie McKeon (Flynn) and Carmel Doherty (Foran). In the early 1980s, mainly through the work of Councillor Joe Mooney, grant assistance was obtained through An Chomhairle Leabharlanna and a new branch was opened in what was once the Market House. This branch opened in February 1985. Marian Mulvey has been in charge of this branch for a long number of years.

Mohill

The first branch library was opened in the Canon Donohoe Hall in September 1958. Canon Masterson performed the official opening and the first librarian was Mary Killion. In October 1983 the branch was moved to a premises in Hill St owned by Patsy Walpole. It moved again in 1986 to a premises owned by Ivan Huston in Bridge St. Finally, with grant assistance from the Dept, a new library was opened in what was previously a Teagasc premises in Castle St in February 1996. Staff over the years has included Mary Killion, Philomena Reynolds, Molly Canning, Mary Conefrey and the present Librarian, Evelyn Kelly.

Ballinamore

Ballinamore branch operated from three different rooms in the Courthouse between 1931 and 1999. It was moved in to a premises belonging to Johnny Martin in High St in 1999 where it remained until the opening of the new headquarters in 2005. The branch has been staffed by a variety of persons over the years but Mary Bohan has been the librarian in the High St premises since the library moved there. The staff in the new branch library are: Hilda King, Mary Bohan and Veronica McKeon and in the Local Studies section: Mary Conefrey and Caroline Martin

Manorhamilton

The first branch library was opened in the Courthouse in Manorhamilton on 1 February 1956. Here the library remained until it moved to the Comprehensive School on 6 November 1980. The first branch Librarian in the Courthouse was Mary Kilbane. She was followed by Frances O'Dowd, Kathleen Keaney and Ann Farrell. When the Library moved to the Comprehensive

School staff included Ann Farrell, Mae Kelly, Theresa Kelly and Breda Sweeney. A new Library opened in Manorhamilton in December 2005 and is staffed by Kathleen Casey, Theresa Kelly and Martina Feeney

Kiltyclogher

The first Branch Library opened in Kiltyclogher in August 1977 in a pre-fab at the National School. It later moved to a room in the Community Centre. As a result of severe cutbacks the library closed in January 1988. Librarians at this branch included Margaret Keaney, Evelyn McDermott, Martina Shanley, Mrs. Annie Shanley, Bernadette Bredin and Mrs. Rose Bredin. A new library funded by the Programme for Peace and Reconciliation opened in Kiltyclogher in June 2004. Orla Parkinson is now the Librarian.

Dromahair

The branch library opened in Dromahair in November 1977 in the old Church of Ireland School. This is the only branch library in the county still in its original location. The first branch librarian was Nora Lynch, followed by Teresa Kelly, Mary McMahon and the current librarian, Breda Sweeney.

Kinlough

The library opened in the Courthouse in Kinlough about 1957. Librarians there included Mary Connolly, Mary O'Malley, Rita Kelly NT, John Gallagher (ex Garda), Mrs. Mary Gallagher and Nuala Galligan. The current Branch Librarian Mary McGowan has served in Kinlough Library since 1980 and is now assisted by Fiona Gilroy.

Carrigallen

The first Branch Library was set up in the Community Centre at the end of 1962. The library was in the cloakroom and was operated for the next twenty-six years by Tom Farrell and his wife Margaret. Due to cut backs the branch was closed in January 1988. A new branch was opened in Main St in October 2002 with Helen Corcoran as Librarian

Last of the Centres

The last two voluntarily operated centres to survive were in Newtowngore (Operated by Sheila Kiernan) and in Drumkeeran (Operated by Mary Shields). Drumkeeran closed in August 1979 and Newtowngore closed about 1980.



Mohill Library – Official Opening

The official opening of Mohill Library in 1996.

L to R: Sean Ó Suilleabháin, Paddy Fahy, Co Manager, Sean McGowan, Cathaoirleach, Leitrim Co Council, Mary Conefrey, Branch Librarian



Russian O'Rourke Documents presented to Co Library

The Leitrim Local Studies collection is one of the best in any county in Ireland. Here in October 1990, the Russian Ambassador to Ireland presents documents from Russian archives relating to the O'Rourkes of Leitrim who went to Russia:

L to R: Igor Evelolimov, Cultural Attache, Mr Urinov, Ambassador of the Soviet Union, Sean Ó Suilleabháin, Jim Joe Shortt, Cathaoirleach, Leitrim Co Council.

Staff

The following are the names of full-time staff who worked at Co Library. This list may not be completely comprehensive.

Rita Sharpley	John Clancy
Maura McCrann (Mahon)	Patricia Gilheany
Mamie McKeon (Flynn)	Aidan Nangle
Ann Gaffney	Paddy Clyne
Annie Doonan	Éamon Walsh
Ann Kelly (Scully)	Breda Heraty
Maureen Moran (O'Hara)	Rosaleen Kielty (Conefrey)
Maureen Sweeney (Keon)	Bríd Prior
Ann Sammon	Patricia McKiernan (Keenaghan)
Imelda Guckian	Elizabeth Molloy
Michael Heelan	

Current Headquarters Staff

Full Time

Sean O Suilleabháin
Gabrielle Flynn
Mary Corby
Caroline McCartin

Part Time

Veronica McKeon
Margaret McCabe
Mona Creamer

Caretaker

The Courthouse, which was built in the early 1830s, always had a resident caretaker. This despite the fact that it had just one court day per month. In 1931 the caretaker was paid £8 a year for maintaining the Courthouse, plus their accommodation, heat and light. This was increased to £20 a year when the library moves in. The Smith family were the caretakers and Ena Smith married Jim Turbitt. The Turbitt family were the last to live in the Courthouse. Mrs Ena Turbitt moved out in the early 1970s.

Before storage heating was installed in the early 1980, five coal fires had to be lit each morning. In latter years this was done by Mick Clyne.

Acknowledgements

Ár mbuíochas do gach duine a chabhraigh linn leis an bhfoilsíúcháin seo. Special thanks to Willie Donnellan, Leitrim Observer for photographs, also to Tess Reynolds, Noeleen Smith, Beth Earley and Fr Denis Delaney.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE 2005

SENATOR PASCHAL MOONEY (CATHAOIRLEACH)

DAMIAN BRENNAN

CAILLIAN ELLIS

GORDON HUGHES

MARTIN KENNY

PADDY O'ROURKE

JAMES JOSEPH SHORTT

SINEAD GUCKIAN

LIAM McELGUNN

SEAN McGOWAN

THOMAS MULLIGAN

GERARD REYNOLDS

ENDA STENSON

MARY BOHAN

GERRY DOLAN

FRANCIS GILMARTIN

ENDA McGLOIN

JOHN McTERNAN

MICHAEL COLREAVY

FRANK DOLAN

TONY FERGUSON

AODH FLYNN

SEAN McDERMOTT



Presentation of Prizes at Children's Book Week in Carrick on Shannon Branch:

Front:
Eleanor Monahan,
Úna Kennedy,
Hilda King,
Branch Librarian,
Gráinne O'Connor.

Back:
Wayne Comer,
Mary Corby,
Co Library.



New Library Headquarters and Branch

Work on the site for the new library commenced on 10 October 2003 and the building was completed in November 2004. The library was officially opened on 17 June 2005

The Library covers an area of 720 Sq m and includes adult lending and reference, children's section, exhibition area and an extensive local studies section. The headquarters has extensive office space and storage facilities.

There are internet computer facilities for public access, a sensory panel in the children's area, books in a variety of languages and many other facilities.

The project cost €2.9m and received funding from the Dept of the Environment.

Architects

Main Contractor

Mechanical Contractor

Electrical Contractor

Service Engineers

Structural Engineers

MurrayÓLaoire, Fumbally Lane, Dublin

Kilcawley Construction, Strandhill Rd, Sligo

Kearns Mechanical Services, Newtownbutler, Co Fermanagh

Camlin Electrical, Clondra, Co Longford

Cogan & Shackelton, Coleraine, Co Derry

Concannon Healy Heffernan, Sligo



Carrigallen Library opened in October 2002: Pictured at the opening are:

L to R: Sean O Suilleabháin, Co Library, Ballinamore, Helen Corcoran, Branch Librarian, Carrigallen, Mary Corby, Mary Conefrey, Gabrielle Flynn (all Co Library, Ballinamore), Councillor Paddy O'Rourke, Carrigallen, Councillor Cailin Ellis, Senator Paschal Mooney, Councillor Jim Joe Shortt, Danny McLoughlin, Co manager, Councillor Tommy McCartin, Jack O'Neill. Seated at front: Gretta O'Neill