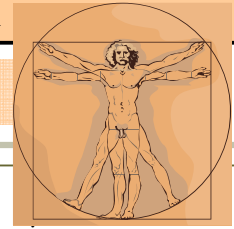


# ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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## Welcome to the new Arts, Humanities and Social Science Research Newsletter – Robin Adams College Librarian (radams@tcd.ie)

The Library's Research Newsletter for the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences is an initiative aimed at improving communication between the Library and the College research community in these disciplines. There is a sister publication which will address researchers in the sciences, technology, engineering and health science.

The provision of current, relevant information is vital to the research process and the Newsletter will feature new services and facilities in the Library, as well as highlighting our longer term plans.

The Library is often described as the laboratory for humanities scholars and it is an important space for the researcher to engage with materials. The range of electronic services which can be accessed from outside the physical library is increasing and articles in the newsletter will draw attention to important acquisitions and facilities in print, manuscript and other formats. It will feature contributions from specialists in library resources across subject fields and in the special collections of manuscripts, early printed materials and maps.

As you will know, the Long Room Hub acts as the focus for facilitating humanities research strategy in College and for the exploration of the Library's research collections, so the newsletter will include reports on aspects of research undertaken within the Long Room Hub.

I very much hope that this will provide useful information in support of your work and warmly encourage you to respond to the individual contributors and to the editor, Jessica Eustace.

## The Manuscripts Department – an overview Felicity O'Mahony Assistant Librarian

Since the 1960s the Manuscripts Reading Room has been housed in the upper reaches of the west end of the Old Library. The public face of this department is perhaps most closely associated with such iconic manuscripts as the Book of Kells, the Book of Durrow and the Book of Armagh. But these treasures are only part of the story. The manuscript collections date back to the earliest years of the foundation of the College and are now numbered in the 11000s. A manuscript number can refer to a single volume or to a collection comprising thousands of individual items. The earliest holdings, such as the Egyptian Books of the Dead, date from the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC and the accessions continue right up to the recent correspondence and papers of living authors. The collections range over such diverse subjects as medieval Latin manuscripts, Irish language manuscripts, 1641 Depositions, 1798 rebellion papers, College muniments charting the day to day administration of the university, medical archives, estate papers, literary and

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historical collections from the 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

The collections reflect the intellectual, spiritual economic and everyday lives of scholars, patriots, rebels, religious, politicians, eccentrics, landowners, servants and students. Occasionally mere bystanders at the great events in our history are given a voice through their letters, diaries and photographs. The 1916 Easter Rising, for example, can be examined from the Establishment point of view of members of the College Board or the Dublin University Officer Corps who defended the College. More personal narratives such as those of playwright Denis Johnston whose home was occupied by rebels during the Rising or Republican Frances Downey who participated in the rebellion act as an interesting counterpoint.

## 1641 Depositions – the Conservation Project Laura Caradonna Depositions Conservator (caradonl@tcd.ie)

As part of the 1641 Deposition Project, a joint research project between Trinity College Dublin and the Universities of Aberdeen and Cambridge, seven volumes of Deposition are currently being conserved. These are the remaining items in the collection of 36 volumes; 29 volumes having been previously conserved.



The collection of 1641 Depositions comprises 3,400 statements, and associated materials, in which mainly Protestant men and women of all classes told of their experiences following the outbreak of the rebellion by the Catholic Irish in October, 1641. Details of the project which includes digitization of the manuscripts along with transcription and other scholarly work can be found at: <http://www.tcd.ie/history/1641/>

The documents contained in the untreated seven volumes are in varying stages of deterioration due to the condition of the bindings and the condition of the ink inscriptions,

and are too fragile to allow access to the documents for digitization.

The conservation project aims to stabilize the media and repair and rebind the documents to ensure their preservation into the future. A treatment methodology has been developed taking account of guidelines on the treatment of iron gall ink corrosion established by the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. This involves pre-treatment assessment of the stage of deterioration and the use of a calcium phytate / calcium bicarbonate treatment procedure. Following treatment the manuscripts will be digitized and will be available for online access as well as access in the Manuscripts Department.

### **Introducing the DRIS Project - Tim Keefe Head of Digital Resources and Imaging Services (keefet@tcd.ie)**

The Digital Resources and Imaging Services Department (DRIS) is a new library department dedicated to the digitization and dissemination of digital library collections and resources. Current digitization activities are primarily focused on the Early Printed Book and Manuscripts holdings with special emphasis placed on the development of new resources to support advanced academic research.

Our current project highlights include the digitization of the Samules Collection of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Irish revolutionary materials, digitization of the Annals of Ulster medieval manuscript, and continuing research into multi spectral imaging techniques to support the retrieval of lost and damaged text.

Over the next year we will continue the development of our digital imaging capabilities with the introduction of several new state of the art digital capture stations to support the digitization of oversized, transparent, and dimensional source materials.

In the first half of 2009 we are planning to begin the development of a new Advanced Digital Library Collections Environment to provide online access to our unique library holdings. This digital repository will support the long-term storage and preservation of our digital collections, provide innovative new research toolsets to the humanities researcher, and open library access to a wide variety of new user groups.

For further details please contact the Digital Resources and Imaging Services department at: [digitalresources@tcd.ie](mailto:digitalresources@tcd.ie)

### **New System for off-campus access to E-resources Cliona Ni Shuilleabhain Digital Resources Librarian (cliona.osullivan@tcd.ie)**

The Library is using a new system for providing access to e-journals and other licensed electronic resources from off-campus locations. The system provides easier and expanded access to licensed electronic resources to registered students and staff, irrespective of where they are located. College members linking to an electronic resource from off-campus will be directed to a secure page to authenticate with their College username and network login password.

This support page at <http://www.tcd.ie/Library/resources/> provides more detailed information on the changeover

along with answers to the following common questions:

- How can I access TCD e-journals and databases via Google while off-campus?
- How can I save links to journal/publisher sites in Favorites or Bookmarks to use off campus?
- How can I restore links to Favorites or Bookmarks which haven't worked since the changeover to the new system?

### **Dept of Early Printed Books – Exhibition of botanical books in the Long Room**

**Helen Bradley Assistant Librarian (hbradle@tcd.ie)**

The current exhibition in the Long Room, 'Nature's Bounty: Botanical Beauties in Trinity College Library' offers an opportunity to see on display some of the most beautiful volumes in the Library. Apart from their scientific importance these works demonstrate the book arts of illustration, typography and design at the highest levels. The exhibition gives an indication of the richness for researchers of the Library holdings and includes volumes from the Fagel Collection, the library of Gaspar Fagel, Grand Pensionary of Holland, which was bought by Trinity College in 1802. (The Fagel Collection was the subject of a recent symposium held here in September).

The exhibition takes a thematic approach and includes exploration, speculation and gardens. Included in the exhibition are herbals by Otto Brunfels and Leonhard Fuchs from the early sixteenth century, a tulip manuscript from the era of tulipmania in the Netherlands in the 1630s, Munting's sumptuous volume of botanical discoveries of the seventeenth century and the earliest known Dublin seed catalogue.

Botany has been taught in Trinity College since 1711 and much internationally important research has been published including work by W.H. Harvey, professor of botany at the College in 1856. On show in the exhibition is a specimen of algae and the accompanying field notes sent to Harvey by Charles Darwin.

### **The Francis Database – A European Perspective Ruth Potterton Business & Management Subject Librarian (ruth.potterton@tcd.ie)**

Produced by the Institut de l'Information Scientifique et Technique du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, FRANCIS is strong in religion, the history of art, psychology and sociology. It indexes and abstracts over 4,300 journals and includes books and book chapters, and offers noteworthy coverage of grey literature, including conference papers, French dissertations, exhibition catalogs, legislation, teaching materials and reports. Coverage starts from 1984 publications and currently has about 2M records.

Francis is available on the FirstSearch platform, records in the Francis database are linked to the full text of journals to which the Library subscribes. A 'Trinity Coll,Dub' button indicates this link and will display the text of the original article.

Francis is stronger than most on French and other European language material and well worth exploring both as a database in its own right and as a supplement to more usual sources – give it a try! <http://www.tcd.ie/Library/Get/FRANCIS>

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**For additional information on any of these news items  
please contact the Editor at [eustacj@tcd.ie](mailto:eustacj@tcd.ie)**