Welcome to Issue 12 of Obair

Welcome to the 2004 year-end edition of Obair.

This issue contains a broad selection of articles that were submitted from various people around the organisation. The selection chosen appropriately represents the vast amount of work carried out by the very professional and dedicated workforce in the Office of Public Works. The Office of Public Works continues to deliver a high quality service and we strive to improve on this already high standard in line with Government policies.

This issue features articles on the Dublin Castle 800 exhibition, the handover of the State Laboratory and Heritage Week, as well as many more which will be of interest to all people in the Office of Public Works. Special thanks is extended to all those who have taken time out of their busy schedule to submit articles for the magazine.

Comments on this issue of Obair are very welcome and please remember to keep the articles for future editions flowing in to any member of the editorial team.

George Moir, Denis Murphy, Mary Cash

Editorial Team
Dublin Castle 800

An Exhibition Celebrating Dublin Castle in Irish Life Opens at Dublin Castle.

Photographs by Harry Weir Photography.
Minister of State, Tom Parlon TD, officially opened DUBLIN CASTLE 800 on Thursday, 23rd December 2004.

The exhibition is being held in the Erin Room, Dublin Castle and will run to the end of April 2005. Entrance is free of charge and it is anticipated that both staff and the general public will visit and learn more about the central position of the Castle in all aspects of Dublin and Irish history.

The visually interesting graphic design magnifies the details, the colour and the beauty of the Castle. Balanced with the record of events, social history, anecdotal accounts, witty asides and telling quotations, this colourful and informative exhibition gives a taste of what things were really like. It affords us the opportunity to feel the emotions and experience the impressions of a variety of situations in former Castle days.

The display includes images of maps and memorabilia, some of the archaeological finds unearthed in the 1980s excavations, photographs, paintings and furniture associated with the Castle through the ages and an audio visual presentation of the complete history.

Photographs on display include that of Lord Lieutenant Aberdeen officiating at the Inauguration of Knights of St. Patrick, in St. Patrick’s Hall, 1886; the Changing of the Castle Guard 1890; Inspector Richard Chace of the DMP Mounted Troop c 1905; an annotated intelligence photograph of British Officers in the Upper Castle Yard c1920; the ex Chief and Under Secretaries leaving the Royal Commission 1916; Séan T. Ó Céallaigh leaving the Upper Castle Yard following his inauguration as second President of Ireland on the 25th June 1945; development works in the Upper Castle Yard 1998 and the Inauguration of Ms. Mary McAleese for a second term of office on 11th November 2004.

As a special treat, the Art Management Section of OPW has been successful in obtaining for this exhibition, an original painting attributed to William van der Hagen, of King George II’s Birthday Ball - in the presence of Lord Lieutenant Lionel Sackville, Duke of Dorset - on Saturday, 10th November 1731. This has been lent from a private, anonymous, British collection and will be on view in the Marble Hall for the duration of DUBLIN CASTLE 800.

Following the opening of DUBLIN CASTLE 800 exhibition, the 2nd edition of ‘Dublin Castle at the Heart of Irish History’ was launched by the author, Denis McCarthy, of OPW, Dublin Castle Conference Centre. The book is 140 pages long (twice the length of the 1st edition) and is the catalogue for DUBLIN CASTLE 800 exhibition, as the stories, incidents and text in the exhibition have been adapted from this book.

‘Dublin Castle at the Heart of Irish History’ includes a number of new stories including that of Vicereine Ishbel Aberdeen, founder of Peamount Hospital, extracts from the remarkable letters of 18 year old, 2nd Lieutenant John Samuel Carrothers of the 3rd Battalion of the
Inniskillings, who was stationed in Ship Street Barracks during Easter Week, details of the court martial of James Connolly, which took place in what is now the James Connolly Room, State Apartments, on the 9th May, 1916, the Royal Commission which investigated the facts surrounding the Easter Rising (and found Chief Secretary Birrell primarily responsible for the situation that was allowed to arise and Under Secretary Nathan for not impressing on him the need for more active measures to remedy the situation).

The 1st edition, which was researched by David Benton sold 8,000 copies and forms the backbone of the 2nd edition. The press reviews described it as a concise, lavishly illustrated colourful and attractive production, easy to read without being over-simplistic and a welcome addition to publications on aspects of Ireland's historic past.

The Reason for DUBLIN CASTLE 800

On the 30th August 1204, King John of England issued the following mandate to his 'trusty and well beloved' cousin, Justiciar Meiler FitzHenry:

‘You have given us to understand that you have no safe place for the custody of our treasure, and because for this reason and for many others, we are in need of a strong fortress in Dublin. We command you to erect a castle there, in such a competent place as you may consider to be suitable if need be for the defence of the city as well as to curb it, if occasion shall so require, making it as strong as you can with good fosses and strong walls’.

[The title Justiciar i.e. the Chief Governor or Viceroy (meaning in place of or second to the King) of Ireland, was later to be changed to Lord Deputy and Lord Lieutenant.]

Many buildings were demolished to make way for the building works in the southeast corner of Norman Dublin town. Mighty Dublin Castle, the most important fortification in Ireland, was completed by 1230AD. It boasted an extensive encircling moat (fosse or ditch), a twin towered town gateway with drawbridge and portcullis, and formidable towers in each corner.

The Upper Castle Yard today corresponds closely with the rectangular enclosure of that castle. The Record Tower, which now houses the Garda Museum, is the last intact medieval tower of Dublin city; the main hall of the Conference Centre is partly supported by the base of the Corke Tower; the butt of the Powder Tower and parts of the 10th Viking town defence are on view at the Undercroft (entrance to which is in the north east corner of the Lower Castle Yard, opposite the Chapel Royal): considerable sections of the old curtain (or perimeter) wall are preserved beneath the present buildings; and the base of the Bermingham Tower (immediately inside Ship St. Gate ) is original (its superstructure, including the Round Room adjoining St. Patrick's Hall, was rebuilt in 1777).

The Castle remained in continuous occupation and was adapted to suit changing requirements. It functioned as the seat of English colonial rule and the centre of military, political and social affairs. At various times it housed the Chief Governors of Ireland (until the Lord Lieutenant moved to the renovated and extended former head ranger's house in the Phoenix Park - the Vice Regal Lodge is now Áras an Uachtaráin), State Prison,

Following the Great Fire of 1664, the Castle's function changed. Henceforth it would be a castle only in name. (The age of fortified castles was over - gunpowder, mortars and large cannon having made them obsolete.) King Charles II, in a Royal warrant, directed that the old walls and as many towers as required be taken down and a new Chief Governor's residence be built 'the same to be still and forever called by the name of the Castle of Dublin'.

Of course, the history of the Castle site is far older than the 800 years of Dublin Castle (and this is amply illustrated in the exhibition): Dublin originated in the area in and around the present Dublin Castle site, on the southern bank of the Liffey estuary, where it entered Dublin Bay.

The present Upper Castle Yard is at the eastern end of the Hazel Wood Ridge (or Drum Choll Coill - which stretched westwards, past Christ Church Cathedral to the town walls at Cook Street, under St. Audoen's Church).

The city gets its name from the Black Pool harbour, or Dubh Linn, that occupied the site of the present Castle gardens. Part of the town's 10th century Viking defence bank is on view in the Castle's Undercroft. A number of historical references indicate that an early Norman castle or tower occupied part of the present Dublin Castle site. What appears to have been part of the enclosing wall of the earlier Norman Castle was uncovered in the 1980s archaeological dig that preceded the OPW's development works.

Some incidents from the Castle's history that are of interest:

Asculf MacThorkil, the 25th and last Viking King of Dublin, was taken prisoner to the Norman headquarters at the 'Castle of Divelin' - probably on the southeast part of the present Upper Castle Yard.

Prisoner Adam Duff O'Toole was condemned for refuting the divinity of Jesus Christ and burnt at the stake at Hogges (now College) Green in 1328.

Following Edward Bruce's invasion of 1315 and the Black Death, 1348, King Edward III sent his son Lionel of Clarence to save the colony. He established a jousting ground on the site of part of the present Upper Castle Yard.

The most famous of all escapes from Dublin Castle - that of Red Hugh O'Donnell - on the 6th January 1591.

Philip Dormer Stanhope was appointed Lord Lieutenant Chesterfield in 1745. He initiated the construction of the State Apartments and by 1761, the main rooms were completed - including the present grand entrance, the Battleaxe staircase, a new suite of State bedrooms, the State Corridor, the Throne Room, the Portrait (Picture) Gallery and the ballroom, which became (was renamed) St. Patrick's Hall when the Knights of St. Patrick were first invested here in 1783.

The Upper Castle Yard was the scene for the handover on 16th January 1922. Lord Lieutenant (Viceroy) Fitz-Alan is reported to have grumbled "You are seven minutes late Mr. (Michael) Collins to which he received the reply: " We've been waiting over 700 years, you can have the extra seven minutes". Collins later reflected: 'how could I have expected to see Dublin Castle itself - that dread Bastille of Ireland - formally surrendered into my hands, in the brocade hung
Council Chamber? (This was sited in the centre of the 'Revenue cross block')

The following quotation from Maurice Craig's 1952 book, Dublin 1660 -1800, about the Castle, may be useful: 'The total effect in redbrick with cream stone trimmings, segment-headed ground floor windows and arcades at salient points, is charming in intimate collegiate fashion, persuading one to forget the evil role of the Castle in Irish affairs. The Upper Castle Yard, in particular, evokes to perfection the complacent Hanoverian corruption of that era. It seems to tell us that though every man has his price, the prices are moderate and have all been paid on the nail. Everything is running like well oiled clockwork and the clockwork soldiers are changing guard in front of the Bedford Tower'.

**OPW Development Works**

Following the transition to the Irish nationhood, its political significance much diminished, Dublin Castle suffered neglect and many areas deteriorated and fell into disrepair.

The Supreme Court occupied the former Council Chamber, before moving back to the reconstructed Four Courts.

Additional government apartments and offices were accommodated throughout the complex, including the Dept. of Industry and Commerce, the Paymaster General, the General Post Office Engineers and Savings Bank, various Revenue Commissioner's Offices and the Children's Court.

Infrequent formal uses included the inauguration of Irish Presidents in St. Patrick's Hall.

Fire extensively damaged the southeast corner of the State Apartments in 1941, which was rebuilt in the 60s along with the adjacent Cross Block, where serious structural problems had been observed at the beginning of the century.

A four storey modern office block was constructed in the Lower Castle Yard, on the site of the main stables, and occupied by the Revenue Commissioners in 1974.

Georges Hall (where the Moriarty Tribunal now sits) was built in 1911 as a supper room for the last Royal visit (of Queen Mary and George V, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Emperor of India). It was adapted for use in conjunction with St. Patrick's Hall for Ireland's first Presidency of the E. E. C. in 1975 (Ireland having become a member in 1973).

In the 1980s, funds were allocated to the Office of Public Works to implement a large-scale development programme. Archaeological excavations were carried out in advance of these works and uncovered the base of the Powder Tower and what appears to have been part of the enclosing curtain wall of the earlier Norman castle. In addition, almost 100,000 artefacts, ranging from Viking times to the 18th century, were recovered from the moat areas. They included bone items (pins, needles, combs and dice), leather scabbards and shoes, knives, arrow and spear heads, coins and tokens, keys and buckles, ceramics, pottery, tiles, glass and bottles.

The 18th century north east range (Blocks 8-10), which are now occupied by the Revenue Commissioners, which had straddled the infilled moat (which had been used as a convenient dump over the centuries) was suffering uneven subsidence. Its Upper Castle Yard façade was retained, while the rebuilding above basement level followed along the lines of the original Georgian structures (from which every attempt was made to salvage materials for use in the reconstruction).
The adjacent Undercroft, (with sally port steps cut through the north eastern curtain wall, moat archway and part of the town wall, as well as part of the 10th century Viking town defence bank which is enclosed within the base of the 13th century Record Tower) was preserved and protected. Walkways were added for visitor access and it is now a very important part of the Dublin Castle tour.

E.U. Presidency requirements had increased to such a degree that the international conference facilities of Dublin Castle Conference Centre were constructed between 1987 and 1989, behind the northeast corner façade of the Upper Castle Yard.

The dummy, or blind, Gate of Fortitude was opened. The top floor of the Bedford Tower building, which had been added in 1820, was removed - so restoring the architectural symmetry of the Upper Castle Yard. A modern extension, clad in alternate bands of limestone and granite and incorporating the old Guard House façade (at Cork Hill Gate) was attached to the rear of Bedford Tower. (They are now the Castle Hall dining and meeting facilities.)

Works were also carried out to stabilise the east end of the Neo-Gothic Chapel Royal, where the oak galleries and stained glass chancel windows display the coats of arms of the Chief Governors from the first, Hugh de Lacy to the last, FitzAlan-Howard.

A very recent award: The Dubhlinn Gardens were fitted out as a helicopter-landing pad, with a pattern of six interlocking brick pathways that are distinctive from the air and the State Apartments. On the 15th November 2004, the Dubhlinn Gardens were accorded the Best Landscaped Open Space award in the City Neighbourhood Competition of 2004, by the Tidy Towns Unit of the Dept. of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

The Lord Lieutenant’s Coach House (1833) was restored in 1995. Ship Street Barracks, comprising nine terraced houses, were interconnected and fitted with steel framed construction to compensate for their poor structural condition and now house Revenue Commissioner offices.

The U-shaped former Army Ordnance Office (1820) was renovated and linked by a glazed concourse to a new two-storey exhibition area for the relocated Chester Beatty Library.

The 18th century Armoury (now Garda offices) and Treasury Building (the oldest dedicated office block in Dublin - now occupied by the Comptroller and Auditor General’s Office, with gift shop and restaurant facilities in its barrel-vaulted basement) were restored in 1997 and 1992 respectively.

The more recent Upper Castle Yard cobblestone paving provides a reminder of the Castle’s military history.

Denis McCarthy
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SERVICES
The final function at Farmleigh associated with Ireland’s Presidency of the European Union finished on Wednesday the 30th of June. The House and Grounds opened for public enjoyment on Saturday the 3rd of July. Over 109,000 people visited Farmleigh in 2004 despite the fact that the Estate was closed to the public from January to end-June as a result of EU Presidency meetings and functions.
Summer Programme

It was decided to continue with the theming of events on a monthly basis as had happened in 2003. Monthly themes of Music in July, Gardens in August, Food in September and Art & Design in October/November were used for the 2004 Programme of Events. Reflecting Farmleigh’s official role to provide hospitality for Government meetings and state guests of the nation, this year Farmleigh opened its doors to ‘cultural guests of the nation’ from a variety of different countries.

During July, Theatre Batida from Denmark kicked off Farmleigh’s cultural programme with an outdoor performance to entertain our younger visitors. Their quirky performance brought much laughter to the younger and older attendees. Throughout the month of July, many of Ireland’s leading brass and concert bands performed in our Edwardian Bandstand Afternoons on Sundays. Four beautiful performances of collaborating artists from home and abroad delighted successful ticket holders for our Ballroom series of concerts – the Irish Baroque Orchestra, Liam O’Flynn and Tony McManus, Michael O’Suilleabhain, Mel Mercier & Eliza Cathy and John O’Conor and Rosalind Plowright. As a terrific finale to the music month, the RTE Farmleigh Proms in association with Deloitte took place during the last week in July in the grounds at Farmleigh. The RTE National Symphony Orchestra, RTE Concert Orchestra & Big Band together with guest performers regaled packed audiences for 7 nights.

An exciting month of garden events kicked off in August with a mixture of practical garden tips and garden design and history lectures on offer to Ireland’s growing number of gardeners by a mixture of Irish and International speakers including John Cushnie, Michael Balston, Finola Reid and Sean O’Gaoithin to name a few. There were creative Children’s Garden Workshops with Celia Spouncer, which aim to inspire and interest our younger visitors in the natural world around them. Probably the most beautiful event in our calendar this year was the flower demonstration by Jane Packer. The September Food Market again brought in visitors in their thousands to enjoy the seasonal fare on offer from an even wider selection of stalls and producers from all over the country. All our events during September are carried out in conjunction with Bord Bia. To complement the market a number of leading food writers and chefs shared their favourite recipes and ideas in a range of talks with tastings. Carolyn Robb, formerly of the Prince of Wales’ Highgrove Estate, Dennis Cotter and Noel MeMeel from Castle Leslie were among the many speakers. Farmleigh’s inaugural Artisan Bread Award in association with Bord Bia and the National Bakery School DIT was awarded in September to La Maison des Gourmets for their artisan bread.

The finale to a very hectic cultural programme at Farmleigh in 2004 was the Art & Design month in October. Farmleigh holds important collections of paintings, sculpture, furniture, china, glass, tapestries, books and silver from the 17th to the 21st century either owned by the Office of Public Works or on loan from public or private collections. A number of items in the House are on loan from the Guinness family and are original to the time of Edward Cecil Guinness, the First Earl. International and Irish speakers gave extremely interesting lectures on different aspects of the decorative arts as displayed at Farmleigh. Amongst these were, Julius Bryant, Chief Curator at English Heritage, Alice Rawsthorne, Director, Design Museum London, Lynsay Sheppard, Maire Byrne,
Joe McDonnell and Phillipa Glanville. The Sculpture Commission to mark the EU Presidency was awarded to Brian King with a formal announcement of this by Minister Parlon in October. The Sculpture in Context Exhibition, which was held at Farmleigh from mid-October to mid-November, proved a huge attraction for our visitors. As part of an initiative to focus on design in Ireland an award was made to the NCAD Metal Arts Department for a precious metals commission for a letter opener for use by visiting dignitaries to the House.

CHRISTMAS

A large number of functions took place in December as many Government Departments take advantage of hosting their events to coincide with a beautifully decorated Farmleigh.

The House re-opened for Christmas on 4 December 2004 with an attendance of over 4,500 during the first weekend and was beautifully decorated in a traditional Edwardian style with the guiding staff wearing period dress.

A huge team effort goes into getting the House and Estate ready for the Christmas Season. George O’Keefe, Dick Browne, Owen Finlay and Brian Sweeney Jnr. all worked on creating a Dickens-style Christmas story telling room entitled ‘Charlie Cobblestone’s Storytelling Emporium’ which includes a mock fireplace out of which Aislinn O’Loughlin appears to enthral our younger audiences. Santa makes a surprise appearance down the chimney during one of the stories and no prizes for guessing who on the Farmleigh staff plays this role – the one and only Mr. Paddy O’Keefe. It didn’t escape our notice that the accompanying adults seem to be enjoying the Emporium just as much as the little ones. In addition a live crib was on display in the stables.

David Levins at Farmleigh co-ordinated the entire programme of events over the 3 weekends. The events include food and floral decoration demonstrations by Clodagh McKenna and Carol Bone respectively. These demonstrations were ticketed events and the dates were hugely oversubscribed. Christmas carols were performed in the Ballrooms on Saturdays and Sundays by highly regarded choirs such as RTE Cor na nOg, Gloria, The Dublin Airport Singers, The Lassus Scholars, The Frank Patterson Choir and the Goethe-Institut. The Mellowchords provided roving Barbershop Harmonies throughout the Estate. The hugely successful Food Markets were back in the Courtyard with a mouth - watering selection of edible delights made by many of Ireland’s leading gourmet producers.

Refreshments were available at both the Motorhouse Café and the Boathouse – savoury fare in the Motorhouse with ‘Sweet Christmas’ fare available at the Boathouse.

Those lucky to be drawn coveted tickets for the Anuna concert were duly rewarded with a most beautiful candlelit performance which had the hair rising on the back of your neck. A fitting evening to get lucky ticket holders into the Spirit for Christmas.

Mary Heffernan
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SERVICES
On 21 July, 2004 Mr. Tom Parlon, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Finance with responsibility for the Office of Public Works performed the official opening of the Famine Warhouse 1848, Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary.
During the Great Famine (1845-50) the Warhouse was the scene of the 1848 Rebellion by the Young Irelanders. The new permanent State exhibition in the house tells the story of the Famine and the Rebellion, and the trial, imprisonment, and penal exile of the leaders in Van Diemen’s Land (now Tasmania, Australia). The Rebellion is one of the best-documented events in Irish history and eyewitness accounts from participants – police, rebels and the children who were in the house – have been used throughout the exhibition.

The Rebellion was led by the Protestant aristocrat William Smith O’Brien, who was born in Dromoland Castle and was a descendant of Brian Boru. O’Brien was MP for County Limerick and he regarded the horrors of the Famine and the deaths of a million people as justifying his resistance to the State. He hoped to use moral force to convince the State to grant Irish self-government. He was an idealist who tried to unite landlord and tenant and to stage a bloodless revolution in 1848 but when he was met by the forces of the State at Ballingarry the limits of his moral force were reached. He was just after shaking hands with some of the forty-seven police in the house and telling them that all that he wanted was their guns and they would be free to go, when the police commander ordered his men to open fire on O’Brien’s local supporters. The attempts by John O’Mahony to re-start the Rising in September 1848 at Glenbower, Ahenny and Portlaw are covered in the exhibition, as is James Fintan Lalor and the 1849 movement.

After the failure of the Rising, O’Brien, Thomas Francis Meagher, Terence Bellew MacManus and Patrick O’Donohoe were tried for High Treason at Clonmel. They were sentenced to death, which they refused to appeal. The sentences were

The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, described the house as ‘an important historic monument and part of our national heritage’ and acknowledged the appropriateness of it housing a permanent exhibition.
commuted to penal exile in Van Diemen’s Land where the transported were joined by John Mitchell, John Martin and Kevin Izod O’Doherty. O’Brien was deprived of his parliamentary seat as a convicted traitor. The exhibition tells how a number of the leaders escaped from Van Diemen’s Land to the United States of America where they became the leaders of the Famine Irish who had fled Ireland into exile.

Meagher who gave Ireland its tricolour flag in 1848 (a fact commemorated at the 1848 flag monument in The Commons) became a Brigadier General leading the Irish Brigade in some of the greatest battles of the American Civil War and died as acting governor of Montana.

The Kilkenny man, James Stephens, aide-de-camp to William Smith O’Brien at the Famine Warhouse, escaped after the Rising with his 1848 colleagues John O’Mahony (from Ballycurkeen, Carrick-on-Suir) and Michael Doheny (a native of Fethard who lived in Cashel) and with these men he founded the Fenian movement. The Young Irishers, Charles J. Kickham (from Mullinahone) and John O’Leary (from Tipperary Town), went on to become prominent Fenians. Others achieved high offices abroad that were denied to their talents in Ireland. Charles Gavan Duffy, editor of The Nation, became premier of the state of Victoria in Australia; Thomas D’Arcy McGee became a cabinet minister and one of the founders of modern Canada. Richard O’Gorman became a judge of the superior court in New York. John Blake Dillon, who escaped to New York after the Rising, later became an MP for County Tipperary and the founder of the Dillon dynasty.

The historian Dr Thomas McGrath, a native of Ballingarry, has written the wide-ranging historical exhibition in the house. It locates the Famine Rebellion in its European context and shows how the Young Irishers were influenced by and closely monitored the Revolutions across Europe – in France, Germany, Austria, Italy and Hungary – in 1848.

The Famine Warhouse 1848 was purchased by the State in 1998 during the 150th anniversary celebrations. At the time the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, described the house as ‘an important historic monument and part of our national heritage’ and acknowledged the appropriateness of it housing a permanent exhibition. It is a substantial two-storey building dating from about 1844; it has been the subject of an extensive conservation and renovation project by the Office of Public Works. The Famine Warhouse 1848 is an historic cultural amenity and a new visitor attraction with an important educational role mid-way between Cashel and Kilkenny City.
The ‘Design For All’ exhibition was officially opened at Killarney Library on 9th August and subsequently at the County Library, Tralee, on 6th September 2004.

The exhibition was presented by the OPW in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform and the Institute for Design & Disability. The theme of the exhibition is universal design and its aim is to highlight the difficulties experienced by people with varying degrees of disability and to demonstrate how consultation and design solutions can achieve inclusive accessibility.

Since early 2003, the exhibition has been welcomed by local authorities across the country, including Clare, Limerick, Galway, Cork, Offaly, Leitrim, Kilkenny, Laois, Longford, Waterford, Wexford, Dublin and Kerry. The exhibition, designed by Scroope Design, is itself an example of Design for All. It includes, for example, audio commentary behind each panel describing the text and visual messages, through a button-activated handset mounted on a tactile plate on each panel.

The exhibition is of interest to central and local government, professional bodies, trade, product developers, manufacturers, special interest groups, as well as the general public.

Jack Brennan
PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES
The Flood Relief Design Section in OPW Engineering Services provides a design and advisory service on matters relating to flood relief and flood risk management for the OPW, Local Authorities and other Government Departments.

New Technology in Flood Relief Design Section

The Flood Relief Design Section in OPW Engineering Services provides a design and advisory service on matters relating to flood relief and flood risk management for the OPW, Local Authorities and other Government Departments.
Within the remit of Flood Relief Design Section is the feasibility assessment of potential flood relief schemes and the design of schemes. The Section uses the latest technology in undertaking this work. One particular tool being used with great success is LiDAR.

LiDAR (Light Detection and Range) is a surveying technique that uses an aircraft-mounted laser to sweep the ground profile with laser pulses. A recorder registers when reflections from these pulses arrive back at the aircraft. By linking this recorder to the movement of the aircraft and ground-based Geographical Positioning System (GPS) stations, the resulting data can be fed into a computer that will build up a model of the local terrain.

This terrain model can be processed to remove vegetation, buildings, cars, etc. providing a “bare earth” profile.

The advantages of using LiDAR are enormous:

• Being an aircraft mounted system, it avoids the disruption both to the public and to the environment associated with the entry of ground-based survey teams to private property.

• The safety of surveying staff is always an important consideration; the ability of LiDAR to survey areas such as roads or railways without placing staff in the proximity of traffic greatly enhances this.

• Data covering large areas can be acquired in a very short period of time.

For example, most recently, 46 km² of survey was carried out at 4 sites in locations as widely dispersed as Templemore (Co. Tipperary), Lough Ree and Garriskil Bog (midlands) and Ballyteigue (Co. Wexford) in just 2 days.

Once the survey has been flown, the highly automated data processing stage allows the final product to be rapidly turned out.

In the example above, data was received for the four sites 5 weeks after the survey was flown; by contrast, a ground-based survey would have taken several months to produce the same data.

The data obtained in this example was accurate to +/- 0.15m, although more accurate results can be attained if required.

This data, received as a Digital Terrain Model (DTM), can be rapidly manipulated to produce cross-sections and storage areas, and is used by the Design Section to build hydraulic models to investigate flooding and to design flood protection measures.

Computer generated 3D models of the data make for straightforward identification of flood paths and secondary features; these models can even be used to create a “fly-through” view of a scheme.

Luke Ballantyne
ENGINEERING SERVICES
Heritage Week 2004 ran from 5 - 12 September and several of the heritage sites managed by OPW hosted special events or offered special concessions. Events and activities ranged from guided tours and lectures to music recitals, storytelling, historical re-enactments, craft exhibitions, art exhibitions and activities for children.
The OPW participation in the week was launched in Emo Court, Co. Laois on Saturday 4th September. Visitors to the castle were transported back in time to the 18th century. All around were elegant ladies and gentlemen resplendent in their Georgian finery, including the Earl and Countess of Portarlington who commissioned the building of Emo Court in 1790. Visitors had a chance to play croquet on the lawn, observe archery competitions as well as watch the gentlemen of the household at shooting practice. Beautiful music wafted its way through the house where a musician played on his hammer dulcimer, the forerunner of the piano. Among the many visitors on the day was Minister of State Tom Parlon TD who very nearly did not make it, for he was set upon by a pair of highwaymen as he made his way to the house in his horse drawn carriage. Fortunately he was saved by a quick thinking local pikeman who chased off the two bandits!
On Sunday 5th September Charles Fort, Co. Cork was the scene of military re-enactments where Minister Parlon witnessed a skirmish between the Redcoats and a group of United Irishmen who had come all the way from Kildare. In a quick spot of time travel the minister conversed with a group of Norman Knights, viewed American Civil War re-enactments and took a salute from a group of UN veterans!

Heritage Week has a strong musical tradition with annual performances taking place in many of the sites. This year on Wednesday 8th September Minister Parlon attended a very special performance in Castletown, Co. Kildare. Listeners were treated to pieces by Bach, Mozart, Elgar and Beethoven and the performance must surely have been enhanced by its location in the wonderful 18th century architectural setting of this magnificent Palladian style country house.
On Thursday 9th September Minister Parlon dropped into the Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre to catch the Boyne Currach Exhibition which ran throughout Heritage Week. The Minister availed of the opportunity to take a trip on the river in a Boyne Currach and also heard a talk on the history and use of the currachs, and how they were made.

Over 4000 visitors attended The Battle of the Boyne site, Oldbridge Estate during Heritage Week where they enjoyed a whole series of free events including living history tours, wildlife walks, bat-watches, and cavalry displays. Visitors had the opportunity to visit an army camp of the time, chat with the surgeon and watch the soldiers engage in camp life activities. On Saturday 11th September Minister Parlon visited the site to view cannon being fired and to watch a skilled cavalry display by the members of the Irish Arms re-enactment group.

On Sunday 12th September the Minister took time to drop into the magnificent Trim Castle where Heritage Week events included a series of lectures and living history displays on the arms and armour of the medieval soldiers.

This of course is just a small sample of the many Heritage Week events, which took place on OPW managed heritage sites. All these events serve to highlight our heritage sites and bring them to life for our visitors. Much of the success of these events is due to the hard work and enthusiasm of the guiding staff who every year put an enormous amount of effort into making Heritage Week a success.

Catherine O’Connor
HERITAGE SERVICES
Scattery Island

Scattery Island is located on the County Clare side of the Shannon estuary about one mile from Kilrush. In Irish the island is known as Inis Cathaig, the island of a legendary monster called Cata, who is said to have devoured anyone who attempted to live on the island. The island is however more familiarly associated with St Senan who founded a monastery there and apparently banished the monster forever from Scattery. The legend may be a metaphor for the triumph of Christianity over paganism.
Historically there is no reliable information about St. Senan but he is thought to have flourished around the first half of the sixth century. A thirteenth century life of the saint in Latin verse, an earlier prose life in Irish and an account of miracles associated with him survive. His feast day, recorded as early as the 9th century was March 8th.

Scattery became an important and wealthy ecclesiastical settlement as a result of its strategic location near the mouth of the Shannon estuary where it could control maritime traffic approaching Ireland's longest river. The death of many of its abbots are recorded in the annals between 797 and 1095. The monastery was plundered by the Vikings in 972, 1057 and 1101. The island appears to have been occupied by the Vikings around the 970s and during this time it was attacked by Brian Boru in 977. It was plundered by the Anglo Normans of Limerick in 1176.

Despite these attacks the monastery continued to thrive and by the 12th century Inis Cathaig had become a diocese in its own right but after the death of Bishop Aid O'Beachain in 1188 the island came under the jurisdiction of the diocese of Killaloe. This marked the decline of the settlement and by 1280-1300 the English appointed a series of keepers to the island. During the 15th and 16th centuries the dioceses of Killaloe, Limerick and Ardfert all claimed jurisdiction over various parts of the island. In 1583, however, it was granted by Queen Elizabeth to the mayor and citizens of Limerick.

In the post medieval period Inis Cathaig was the focus of much maritime activity as there was good shelter and a deep harbour in the Scattery Roads. In the late 16th century seven of the surviving ships of the Spanish Armada took shelter there in search of water and provisions. The Spaniards were apparently unsuccessful and left leaving one ship burning where it sank off Scattery Island. It is believed this was the Annunciada. In 1691 the Scattery area was the scene of much activity as the remnants of the French army were evacuating from Limerick by sea and a French vessel sank close to the island with the loss of 100 lives. Scattery's strategic maritime position continued to play a
major role in the 18th and 19th centuries culminating in the construction of a Napoleonic Battery on the southern tip of the island. Due to its location in the Shannon estuary there have been a succession of lighthouses on the island dating from 1680 to 1872.

The remains of six churches together with a round tower, an ogham stone and an early Christian cross slab are strong reminders of the former extent and importance of Scattery. Recent archaeological investigations carried out in conjunction with the rehabilitation of the 19th century cottages for visitor services have revealed extensive evidence of early medieval settlements extending along the shore underneath the cottages and the 16th century castle. The foundations of earlier piers, probably medieval, can be seen at low tide on the south side of the present pier and a tidal mill partly buried in the shingle spit to the north. Middens around the coastline and a burnt mound in the cathedral enclosure also testify to early occupation on the island.

The new visitor facilities on the island, opened by Minister of State Tom Parlon TD on 13 July, 2004, mainly comprise of an existing cottage that has been converted to serve as a visitor reception area and information point. Now when visitors disembark...
from the ferry they can make their way to the visitor reception building where they can avail of information on the history of the island, including the village. In addition to the provision of visitor facilities OPW’s direct labour force has undertaken improvements to the general presentation of the island and facilities to cater for staff undertaking works on the island have also been provided. The design of the new visitor facilities on the island by National Monuments Senior Architect, Paul McMahon, and his team, was mindful of the fact that the mood and ambience of the island should not be compromised by any development.

A monastic trail, a distance of 0.5km, has also been developed. The trail will allow visitors to undertake a self-guided tour of the island with information available at each point of interest along the route. The trail takes in Temple Senan, Senan’s Bed, the monastery of St. Senan, Knocknanangel and Teampall na Marbh.

Access to the island for the public is restricted to the period mid June to mid September and is dependent on tidal/weather conditions.

Martin Luby
HERITAGE SERVICES
The Backweston Laboratory Complex arose from the need to upgrade the existing State laboratories to meet International Laboratory Accreditation standards plus existing and proposed EU directives.
The fruits of the extensive co-operation between the State Laboratory and the Office of Public Works can be seen in the specially developed laboratory design which has enabled the design to meet International Laboratory Accreditation Standards, provide a safe and stimulating working environment, and also to allow for flexibility over time. The design gives value for money not just in terms of capital cost but also in life cycle costs and is more economic than similar European and American examples. A voluntary Environmental Impact Assessment was carried out by the OPW as part of the development process and positive consultation and meetings took place with the local community.

The main purpose of the State Laboratory is to assist the Government in decisions made in relation to areas such as public health, agriculture supports, environmental protection and revenue collection. Special designed laboratories cater for DNA and food dioxin testing. The testing for food dioxins requires class 100 facilities and the State Laboratory is the only facility capable of testing for very small food contaminates in Ireland. The State Laboratory can now fully meet its national and EU obligations with a state-of-the-art laboratory designed by the Office of Public Works.

The concept for the site design was the combination and juxtaposition of formal and picturesque landscape motifs. For example, the formal entrance avenue is on axis with the fire fighting pool and large mound while the site stream and flood attenuation ponds combine informal shapes with picturesque planting. All the foundation spoil and site topsoil has been recycled and incorporated into site mounding thereby giving enclosure and visual interest in an otherwise flat and featureless site.

All site services are routed underground. Staff recreational needs are incorporated into the overall site landscape design. Disabled access is provided throughout the site and buildings.

The concept for the site design was the combination and juxtaposition of formal and picturesque landscape motifs.
The State Laboratory building is made up of a series of L shaped blocks which when combined creates a pattern of courtyard type spaces. Each such space is treated in a different landscaped manner to give individual identity to that part of the laboratory complex.

The external facade of the State Laboratory is made of recycled glass panels covered by a low maintenance facade render which combines with timber windows. The laboratory exhaust flues are incorporated into vertical timber clad ‘chimneys’. The extensive mechanical and electrical services necessary for a state-of-the-art laboratory are contained in the attic space thereby combining ease of maintenance with future flexibility. Each laboratory wing incorporates scientific offices with adjacent meeting rooms, back-up support services and staff social spaces.

The overall campus also has a Shared Facilities Building designed by the OPW. It comprises of an entrance foyer, reception area, dining facilities, tiered conference theatre, breakout meeting rooms and ancillary facilities.

The site and building design aim was to rise above pure utility, beyond basic construction, to combine all that is practical and necessary with landscape and architecture that is meaningful, humane and beautiful.

On 31st August 2004 Tom Parlon TD, Minister of State with responsibility for the OPW handed over the completed phase one of the Backweston Campus to Charlie McCreevy TD, Minister for Finance with responsibility for the State Laboratory. The project completed to date is one of the largest undertaken by the OPW. It has been completed on time, within budget and to a very high standard, which compared to similar facilities in Europe and America gives better value for money.

Ciaran O’Connor
ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES
Ferns Castle Visitor Centre and Tapestry Exhibition

Ferns Castle which is in the care of the Office of Public Works dates from the 13th century and originally the castle formed a square, with large corner towers. Only half of the castle remains today and the most complete of the remaining towers contains a fine circular chapel, with carved ornament.

OPW has provided a visitor reception building close to the castle. The visitor centre, which was part-funded under the National Development Plan 2000 - 2006, is designed in an arc shape to reflect the geometry of the towers of the castle and natural materials such as stone, timber and slate were used in its construction. In addition to providing a guide information service, the reception building houses the Ferns Tapestry Exhibition consisting of 25 individual panels relating the history of Ferns. The main focus of the tapestry is the period 598 AD with the arrival of St. Aidan to preach Christianity, up to the coming of the Normans in 1169. The tapestry panels are the culmination of six years hard work by the Ferns Tapestry Group, a local community group formed in 1997 whose aim was to depict the history of Ferns through stitchwork.

President Mary McAleese formally opened the Ferns Castle Visitor Centre and Tapestry Exhibition in Ferns, Co. Wexford on Thursday 22 July 2004.
# Staff Changes During 2004

## New Recruits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denise McLoughlin</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Feb 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane Flaherty</td>
<td>Engineer Grade 3</td>
<td>Feb 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Martin</td>
<td>Engineer Grade 2</td>
<td>Mar 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Crosbie</td>
<td>Staff Officer</td>
<td>Mar 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronagh Kelly</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Mar 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim O’Sullivan</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Apr 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Murphy</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Jun 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Dwyer</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Jul 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Reilly</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Jul 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura Carney</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eileen Maher</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Oct 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Connolly</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Nov 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinead Murray</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Nov 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Adamson</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Nov 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne Reeves</td>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer</td>
<td>Dec 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McFaul</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Dec 04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Promotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phyllis McGovern</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
<td>Jan 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Dowling</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
<td>Jan 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colm Casey</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
<td>Jan 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Carroll</td>
<td>Executive Officer</td>
<td>Feb 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clara O’Connor</td>
<td>Asst Principal Architect</td>
<td>May 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roland Van Elsen</td>
<td>Senior Architect</td>
<td>May 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declan Currid</td>
<td>Architectural Assistant Grade 2</td>
<td>May 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliona Ni Dhonail</td>
<td>Engineer Grade 2</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Conway</td>
<td>Engineer Grade 1</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mick Long</td>
<td>Assistant Principal Officer</td>
<td>Sep 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeen Kelly</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie Corcoran</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Magan</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Dooley</td>
<td>Staff Officer</td>
<td>Oct 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Maher</td>
<td>Staff Officer</td>
<td>Oct 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Healy</td>
<td>Staff Officer</td>
<td>Oct 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Monks</td>
<td>Higher Executive Officer</td>
<td>Nov 04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Retirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Geraghty</td>
<td>District Inspector</td>
<td>Jan 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Conlon</td>
<td>Senior Architect</td>
<td>Mar 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Towey</td>
<td>Clerical Officer</td>
<td>Apr 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen Smith</td>
<td>Senior Architect</td>
<td>Jun 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Flynn</td>
<td>Senior Clerk of Works</td>
<td>Jul 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Morgan</td>
<td>Architectural Assistant</td>
<td>Aug 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Gleeson</td>
<td>Staff Officer</td>
<td>Sept 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hally</td>
<td>District Inspector</td>
<td>Oct 04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael O’Doherty</td>
<td>Principal Architect</td>
<td>Nov 04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>