

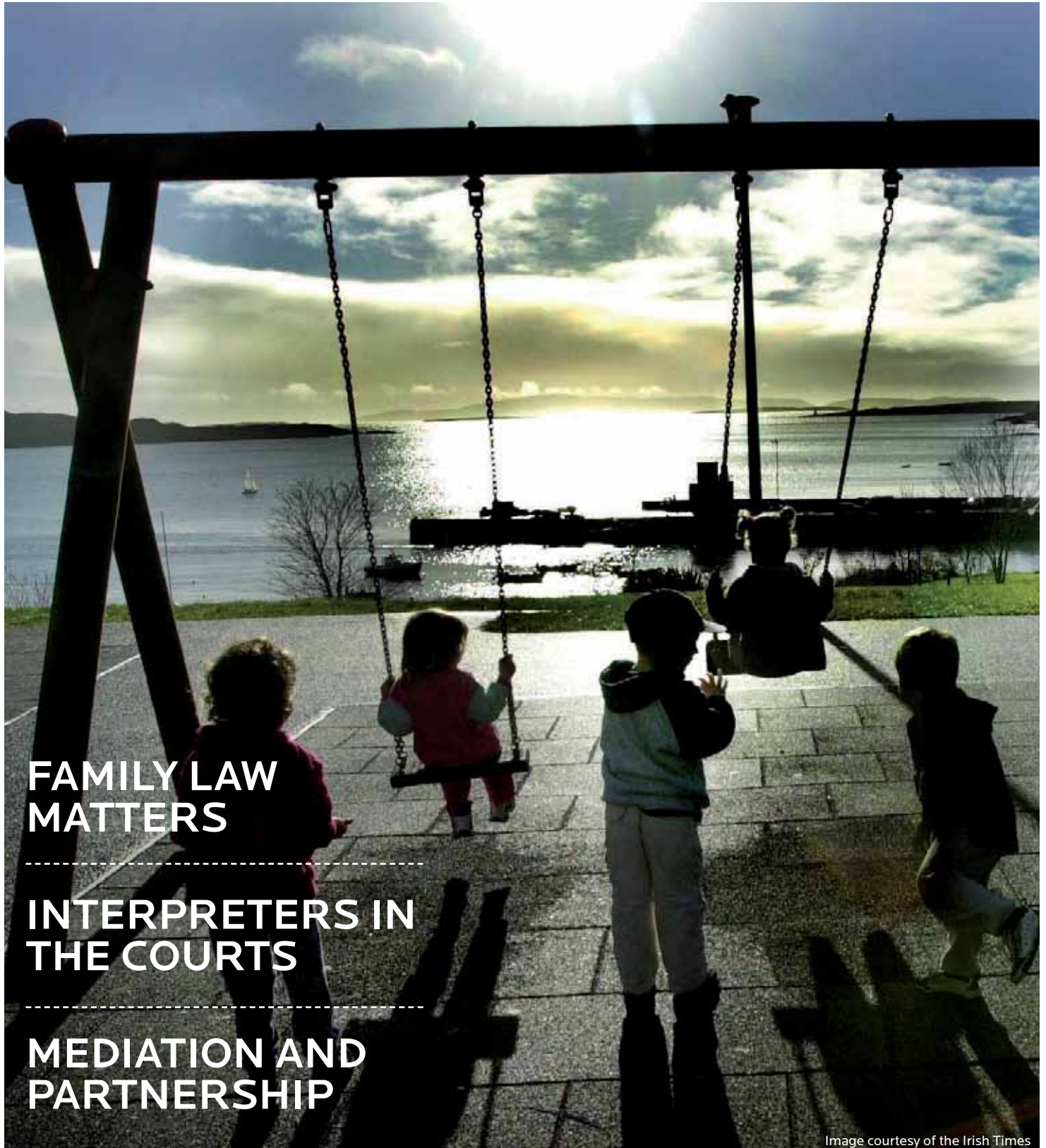
COURTS Service News

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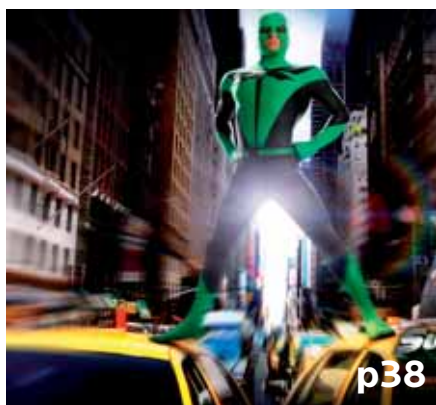


**FAMILY LAW
MATTERS**

**INTERPRETERS IN
THE COURTS**

**MEDIATION AND
PARTNERSHIP**

Image courtesy of the Irish Times



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Eva Avery, deputy editor

Welcome

Welcome to the 'new look' July issue of Courts Service News. The sun has gone to our head and we've decided to have a makeover. We've completely changed our design and layout. We hope you like the new look magazine and would be very interested to hear what you think of it.

The changes extend to our Editorial Team where we're glad to welcome Eva Avery as our Deputy Editor for this issue. Eva worked most recently in our Western Regional Office and brings a wealth of experience about the courts to bear on our publication.

We continue to bring news of developments around the courts. Family law continues to be a major talking point and forms the basis of our main feature. We welcome the imminent publication of another issue of *Family Law Matters* with reports on proceedings in family law courts around the country. We report on a recent seminar on case progression which highlighted issues in the family law courts, provided information on initiatives being undertaken to address them and gave details of initiatives in England & Wales and in Northern Ireland. We also include an interview with the Family Mediation Service.

On the buildings front, a year on we take a bird's eye view of the progress of the new Criminal Court Complex. We also feature the recent opening of Ardee courthouse and take a quick scan around the country to see what else is happening.

We're proud to bring news of the big win for the Courts Service at the recent eGovernment Awards. Our Courts Accounting Project was one of 20 winners out of the 183 entries received.

Gerry Nugent our Eastern Regional Manager tells us about a first time Registrar's conference in Mullingar organised by the Northern, Eastern and Midland Regional offices.

If you ever wondered how you could trace your roots, you can get some great tips in our *Cut Out and Keep* feature. And once again we bring news of the Public Access to Law Mock Trial Competition for transition year students.

We feature the annual 'Summer Evening in Smithfield' and catch up with our intrepid traveller Paddy Monahan who's been whizzing around New York on a bike. We're *Out of the Office* with Eircom League referee Rob Rogers and we have the usual quiz and lots of photos.

We hope you find something to interest you. And don't forget to let us know what you think of our new look.



COURTS SERVICE
An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna

Courts Service News is the magazine of the Courts Service. Contributions are drawn from a wide area and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Courts Service. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions, including letters

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Probate Office Payments

Practitioners should note that fee payments for copy documents and searches should not be sent to the Probate Office, unless the Practitioner is positive that a Grant of Representation has issued in the estate. The Probate Office on receipt of a request will notify Practitioners of exactly how much is payable once it has searched the record, avoiding unnecessary processing of further payments or refunds which regularly are required.

When making the payments Practitioners should make the cheques payable simply to "The Chief Clerk" and not to "The Probate Office." Cheques made payable to "The Probate Office" as and from the 15th May 2008 will be returned to sender, as the Probate Office from said date will not be able to either cash or lodge them in the Bank.

As the Probate Office only retains records of Grants issued in the past 20 years, applications for searches and copy documents in respect of Grants issued earlier than this period should be made to "The National Archives Office, Bishop St. Dublin 8."

TRANSFER OF SITTINGS

Virginia District Court to Bailieborough

Virginia Courthouse closed for refurbishment on the 1st April 2008 and sittings of the District Court have been transferred to Bailieborough Courthouse.

Virginia District Court continues to sit on the 1st Monday and 3rd Thursday of each month (except the usual vacation periods) in Bailieborough Courthouse at 10.30 am.

Please note in relation to adjournments and remands.

Carndonagh District Court

Sittings of Carndonagh District Court will be held in the Courthouse, Buncrana, Co. Donegal until further notice.

Carndonagh sittings will continue on the 3rd Tuesday monthly and the 4th Wednesday of February, April, July, October and December at 10.30 am.

All documents should be sent to District Court Office, Letterkenny.

Circuit Court Rules

S.I. No. 188 of 2008 Circuit Court Rules (Jurisdiction, Recognition, Enforcement and Service of Proceedings), 2008

These Rules amend Orders 14 & 14B and Interpretation of Terms and makes provision for the extension to the Kingdom of Denmark of Council Regulations 1348 of 2000 (on service of judicial and extrajudicial documents in civil and commercial matters) and 44 of 2001 (on jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters).

S.I. No. 189 of 2008 Circuit Court Rules (Trial) 2008

These Rules amend Orders 33 & 59 of the Circuit Court Rules to provide that a notice of trial for the Dublin Circuit shall firstly be completed in the Circuit Court Office before being served and to require at least 21 days notice of the date fixed for trial to be given to the parties.

S.I. No. 191 of 2008 Circuit Court Rules (County Registrar) 2008

These Rules amend Order 18 of the Circuit Court Rules to empower a County Registrar to make an order for the delivery of a further and better statement of the nature statement of the nature of a claim or defence or counterclaim, or further and better particulars.

S.I. No. 201 of 2008 Circuit Court (Fees) Order 2008

This Order revokes the Circuit Court (Fees) Order, 2004 (S.I. No. 445 of 2004).

The Order provides for the fees to be charged in Circuit Court Offices with effect from 07 July, 2008.

In addition, the Order provides for the exemption from fees of certain proceedings, including family law proceedings.

Superior Court Rules

S.I. No. 190 of 2008 Rules of the Superior Courts (Health (Repayment Scheme) Act 2006) 2008

These Rules insert Order 105A and prescribes the procedure applicable in the case of an appeal to the High Court on a point of law under section 16(6) of the Health (Repayment Scheme) Act 2006.

S.I. No. 200 of 2008 Supreme Court and High Court (Fees) Order 2008

This Order revokes the Supreme Court and High Court (Fees) Order, 2005 (S.I. No. 70 of 2005).

The Order provides for the fees to be charged with effect from 07 July, 2008 in the Office of Registrar of the Supreme Court, the Central Office, the Examiner's Office, the Office of the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy, the Taxing Master's Office, the Accountant's Office, the Office of Wards of Court, the Probate Office and District Probate Registries.

In addition, the Order provides for the exemption from fees of certain proceedings, including family law proceedings.

District Court Rules

S.I. No. 202 of 2008 District Court (Fees) Order 2008

This Order revokes the District Court (Fees) Order, 2004 (S.I. No. 446 of 2004).

The Order provides for the fees to be charged in District Court Offices with effect from 07 July, 2008. In addition, the Order provides for the exemption from fees of certain proceedings, including family law proceedings.



Kilkenny history to be preserved as courthouse contract agreed

The Office of Public Works – acting for the Courts Service – has agreed a contract with Michael McNamara and Company for the extension and refurbishment of Kilkenny Courthouse. The €12 million contract will involve the refurbishment of the existing, historic courthouse building along with the construction of a new 3,000 square metre extension. This will be linked to the existing structure by a new atrium which will also serve as a new public entrance. The original entrance will also be retained. The works will provide new and improved accommodation for all Court users and will include two new courtrooms, judges' chambers, consultation rooms for legal practitioners to meet their clients privately, victim support room, improved jury facilities, office accommodation for Circuit and District Court offices and a holding cell area for prisoners.

Temporary relocation of Circuit Court sittings pending the refurbishment of Kilkenny Courthouse

To facilitate the refurbishment of Kilkenny, until further notice all sittings of Kilkenny Circuit Court will

be heard in the following venues:

- Criminal sittings – Carlow Courthouse, Carlow, Co. Carlow
- High Court on Circuit – Carlow Courthouse, Carlow, Co. Carlow
- Civil and Family Law sittings (including District Court Appeals) – Parade Tower, Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
- County Registrar's Motion Courts – Parade Tower, Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
- Criminal Appeals from the District Court – Glebe Hall, Barrack Street, Kilkenny, Kilkenny District Court.

Kilkenny District Court Sittings

Until further notice all sittings of Kilkenny District Court will be held in Glebe Hall, Barrack Street, Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny.



Four Courts to help optimise power at work



The Four Courts has been chosen as one of 100 State buildings to participate in a pilot project to reduce CO2 emissions. The Office of Public Works project, called 'Optimising Power at Work' will be managed by a firm of engineers, White Young Green. The aim is to reduce emissions by 15% or more by increasing energy awareness among staff.

An Energy Officer and an Energy Team will be appointed with a number of on site awareness presentations made to staff. The current energy use of the building will be analysed with a weekly report circulated to staff on their performance. Management will receive a monthly report on the performance of the buildings. Promotional events will include competitions, benchmarking and a poster campaign.

Energy saving is a matter for everyone. It can be as little as switching off lights in rooms not being used and turning off computers, printers and fax machines every evening. It is a subject we will return to again.

FAMILY LAW MATTERS

...latest edition out now

In the latest issue of *Family Law Matters* you'll find further reports of the day to day business of different types of family law cases in the High, Circuit and District Courts.

These reports show that one of the hallmarks of family law cases is that judges are asked to decide on a multiplicity of issues including divorce, separation, division of assets, domestic violence, custody, access, maintenance, the appointment of guardians, and the removal of children from the family.

Practical Solutions

Reports in this issue further show how the courts are dealing with issues including protecting children, encouraging a meaningful participation by both parents in the lives of their children, and allowing parties to separately lead financially viable lives. They also highlight the volume of work being processed in our family law courts and include some reports on appeals dealt with in Dublin Circuit Court.

It has become apparent over the preparation of this and previous issues that the combination of issues such as relationship, emotional, economic, child rearing and health are unique to family law. The impact they have on people influences their bearing and behaviour as they navigate themselves through the family law system.

The emotional impact explains, in some cases, the level of conflict that exists



between the parties and the adverse effect this has, particularly, on children. It also sometimes explains the lack of finality in many cases.

Interviews and Statistics

This issue also continues a series of interviews with those whose work brings them into contact with people involved with family law. Polly Phillimore of the Family Mediation Service, interviewed by Luke O'Neill of our Media Relations Service, gives a valuable insight into the current operation of the Service and the potential it offers for the future.

The series of statistical reports by Dr. Carol Coulter concludes with information from the South Eastern and Eastern regions for the month of October 2006.

Family Law Matters will return in the Autumn with more reports, statistics and interviews.

Copies of the current issue are available from the Courts Service Information Office, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. Tel: (01) 888 6459. Email: publicationsunit@courts.ie. Or visit www.courts.ie

Case Progression in FAMILY LAW proceedings

Case progression is the term given to the case management of proceedings in the pre-trial stage. Its purpose is to ensure that proceedings are prepared for trial in a manner which is just, expeditious and likely to minimise the costs of the proceedings and that the time and other resources of the court are employed optimally.

A draft set of case progression rules for family law proceedings – involving the insertion of new rules in Order 59 of the Circuit Court Rules – has been approved by the Circuit Court Rules Committee and, subject to the Minister's concurrence, is expected to come into operation in the Circuit Court in the near future. The rules would assign to the County Registrar a key role in overseeing preparation of family law cases for trial in the Circuit Court, generally monitoring the progress of the case pre-trial, and making final arrangements for the trial. The County Registrar would establish what steps remain to be taken to prepare the case for trial and fix a timetable for the completion of its preparation, and could give a range of pre-trial directions (e.g. the vouching of items in an affidavit of means and the identifying by the parties of the issues in dispute). County Registrars are already empowered under the Courts Acts to make a range of pre-trial orders, including discovery.

The County Registrar would manage cases by means of a case progression hearing or hearings. Each representative of a party attending the case progression hearing would need to be sufficiently familiar with the proceedings and have authority from their client to deal with matters likely to arise for

Family Mediation can provide alternative

The Family Mediation Service (FMS) primarily helps couples who have made the difficult decision to end their relationship by sitting down with them and setting out all the issues around their separation. **Luke O'Neill** speaks to Polly Phillimore, Service Manager, about the evolving nature of family mediation.

FMS runs 16 offices around the country and employs 25 mediators. Four offices in Cork, Dublin, Galway and Limerick run on a full-time basis, with the remaining offices operating two-and-a-half days a week. Around 1500 people used the service in 2007.

After five or six sessions,

it's hoped that the couple will be in agreement on issues such as family home, pensions and access to children. If there is agreement the mediator will draw up a note of mediated agreement, which is based on the template of a separation agreement. This

Soon to be released figures show that a total of 4,081 applications for divorce and 1,689 applications for judicial separation were made in 2007. A recent seminar for County Registrars outlined the new procedural regime for case progression in family law proceedings soon to be introduced in the Circuit Court. The seminar was opened by President of the Circuit Court, Mr. Justice Matthew Deery and included contributions from Senior District Judge Philip Waller of the Family Law Division, England and Wales, Master Charles Redpath of the High Court in Northern Ireland and Senior Counsel Gerry Durcan.

consideration at the hearing. The County Registrar could, where it was felt appropriate, direct the parties themselves to attend the hearing in addition to their representatives. Each party would be required to complete a detailed questionnaire in a prescribed form, to ascertain the issues on which the parties are in agreement or remain in dispute and the state of pre-trial preparation of the case (e.g. whether there is a need for further pleadings, vouching, discovery, service of pension relief notices, expert reports etc.), and identify any other matters which will require to be attended to in advance of trial.

The volume of pre-trial motions in family law cases in the Circuit Court is considerable, and it is hoped that the new regime will relieve Circuit Court judges of much of their pre-trial applications caseload, freeing them up for trial work, while ensuring that cases coming before judges are better prepared for trial, with the prospect that trial lengths will be reduced.

At the recent seminar Gerry Durcan, S.C., a leading member of the Family Law Bar, gave a presentation on practical issues associated with the conduct of family law litigation. Senior District Judge Philip Waller and Master Charles Redpath spoke about the experience of case management in family law proceedings in England and Wales, and Northern Ireland, respectively. While the law in those jurisdictions is significantly different in some respects from Irish law, Judge Waller's and Master Redpath's insights on the techniques of identifying issues, ensuring full disclosure by the parties and setting timetables for completion of steps, generated great interest.

A presentation on the new procedural regime by Noel Rubotham, Director of Reform and Development was followed by an intensive Question and Answer session on the content of the draft rules. The presence of the entire complement of County Registrars from throughout the country, and their active participation in the Q and A sessions with the presenters, bore testimony – positive feedback aside – to the success of the seminar, and augurs well for the successful operation of the new regime once it comes into effect.

The participants recorded their appreciation of the sterling work undertaken by Liz Hughes and Bernard Regan of the Reform and Development Directorate in organising the event.



Gerry Durcan SC, Master Charles Redpath, Susan Ryan County Registrar Dublin Circuit Court, Mr Justice Matthew Deery, President of the Circuit Court, Snr District Judge Philip Waller and Noel Rubotham Director of Reform and Development.

can subsequently be made a rule of court or later used as the basis for a divorce.

Mediators cannot give legal advice. Occasionally, in situations where they notice something that might cause problems for the clients, they will advise them to seek further professional advice, from solicitors, accountants or actuaries.

Polly Phillimore sees the service working as a parallel process between the clients and their solicitors. While not always leading to the drawing up of a mediated note of agreement, it can lay the groundwork for a more

amicable environment between clients. "We wouldn't measure success in mediation entirely by whether they reach agreement or not because often it really improves their ability to communicate better around their children."

Ms Phillimore believes collaborative law offers a way forward in the family law process. Mediation becomes a more difficult task when clients have already appeared before the District or Circuit Courts, owing to the difference between the adversarial and conciliatory systems. It's for this reason that FMS would like more information to be

available for those separating who are due to appear before the courts.

"Maybe if mediation could happen before it ever gets to the court. I think it would be fantastic if there was a mandatory information session about mediation before people go into court. And that you would have to make an appointment with the FMS, to hear what it's about and hear what your alternatives are. Or even that in the courts, a mediator could be there and say this is what the process is." She says mediation is a good alternative for certain

couples or family members, "rather than it being something you might do so it looks better when you go back to court."

"What should be the primary concern for us, the courts and the legal profession is the client. Going through a separation and any kind of relationship breakdown is traumatic. I think it's our business to make that smoother to the point where people can improve their lives and respect each other, which can be incredibly difficult."

The above text has been edited. The full interview appears in the current issue of Family Law Matters.

Helping us to do things better

Initiatives underway in the Courts Service were explained and court users had a chance to say what they wanted at the 4th Annual Central Customer Forum held in Phoenix House Dublin recently.

"It's about keeping users informed and hearing what they want from us" was how Supreme and High Court Director of Operations, Nuala McLoughlin explained what the forum is about.

In addition to reminding the large attendance of the progress on two of the initiatives explained at last year's event (High Court Search Online and the 'Mystery Shopper' survey) Nuala mentioned a number of important current initiatives:

- The High Court will sit at a number of venues around the country to deal with non-jury work before the end of July
- A new system to expedite the issue of High Court orders has been introduced
- Work has commenced on a new Customer Service Action Plan
- A new Strategic Plan for the Courts Service is in progress and
- The Courts Service second scheme under the Official Languages Act, 2003 is being prepared.



Those interested in criminal law heard of progress on the construction of the new Criminal Court Complex while those interested in buildings generally were treated to a scan around the country to hear of plans.

There was a 'something for everyone' ring to the presentations with much emphasis on family law. Arrangements for the electronic receipt and payment of maintenance were explained together with details of recent improvements in Dolphin House and progress on the subject of family law reporting. Those interested in criminal law heard of progress on the construction of the new Criminal Court Complex while those interested in buildings generally were treated to a scan around the country to hear of plans from North to South and from East to West. The recent educational resource pack 'Let's Look at the Law' designed to help teachers introduce young people to our courts system was very well received and much in demand afterwards.

Those in attendance availed of the opportunity to ask questions of the Courts Service staff present and many commented on the contacts made for future reference!



Sean Quigley, Director of Finance, addresses the forum.

Supreme Court goes online with new website

Want to find a biography of a current or former Supreme Court judge? Or find out what the role of the Chief Justice is? A new website provides information on these and a range of other matters relating to the Irish Supreme Court. We asked Tom Daly, Executive Legal Officer to the Chief Justice and Project Manager for the website to tell us more.

“We wanted to provide information about the Irish Supreme Court for those in Ireland and abroad,” Tom says. “We’ve provided a variety of information and laid it out so that it can be easily accessed.”

“There’s general information on the Supreme Court, including its composition and jurisdiction. We’ve included details of members of the Court, the role of the Chief Justice, and a biography of the Chief Justice and each former Chief Justice. There’s a biography of each judge of the Supreme Court, a list of all former judges of the Court and information on the appointment and tenure of Supreme Court judges.”

The website provides access to all Supreme Court judgments contained on the Courts Service website. And like the Courts Service website you can search judgments by year or perform an advanced search.

“Other information on the site includes contact details for the Supreme Court office, a brief description of the Irish legal system and a diagram of the court system. And we’ve included a bibliography of Irish constitutional law and links to the websites of the Courts Service, the JSI Journal, the European



Court of Justice (ECJ) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).”

The text of the Constitution of Ireland is provided in English and Irish. Indeed all sections of the website are available in both languages. Selected information will soon be available in French and German.

Tom says that plans for the future include a photo gallery of the Four Courts and a list of selected important judgments of the Supreme Court since its establishment.

You can access the Supreme Court website at www.supremecourt.ie.

Supporting those who support victims of crime

The Courts Service continues to host meetings of user groups in various parts of the country. Groups who support victims of crime perform a very important function in our justice system. **Bridie Murtagh** of the Midland Regional Office tells us of a recent meeting in Tullamore.

“Our first formal meeting with victim’s support groups last year was very useful,” Bridie tells us. “There was a lot of interest from the groups and plenty of issues to discuss.”

The Midland Regional Office organised a second event recently and were delighted to welcome representatives from groups including Amen, the Federation for Victim Assistance, the Meath Women’s Refuge and

Longford Women’s Link. Government agencies including the National Commission on Restorative Justice and the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime were also represented.

Among the issues raised was the matter of training for volunteers for the various organisations, a matter that had been discussed at the previous meeting. There is a concern among volunteers that the training they currently receive does not adequately equip them for the task of accompanying victims to court. “They would like better information about what they should and shouldn’t say so they can provide more effective advice to victims,” Bridie explains. Those present were comforted by the response of Denis O’Neill of the

Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime. He explained that the Commission is considering the matter of training and would appreciate hearing more about what volunteers require.

The Groups were also interested in what Brian Fitzpatrick of the National Commission on Restorative Justice had to say and appreciated the interesting leaflets available at the meeting. This new area of law was explained as an alternative to processing criminal hearings giving the victim an opportunity to participate in the sentencing process. News of a recent Report of the Commission is on page 19.

Bridie says that “the venture is proving so successful, we hope to arrange another meeting in about six months time.”

Interpreters keep the message clear

The increase in ethnic diversity evident in Ireland in recent years has placed extra demands on a variety of public service agencies. The Courts Service is meeting this challenge in a positive and proactive way. Just over a year ago Lionbridge Ireland Ltd was contracted to provide interpretation services to meet the increasing demands from those appearing before the courts for whom English is not their first language. The Service is working with Lionbridge to further improve the quality of interpreters available. Gerry Curran outlines below, using the main questions asked of us about interpretation, specifics regarding this service.

Was there much of an increase in interpretation in 2007?

Lionbridge began delivering interpretation services to the Courts Service in March 2007. The total number of cases in 2007 for which services were requested was 7054. The demand for and investment in interpretation has increased dramatically year on year for the past 11 years. In that time there has been a near thirty fold increase in the need for the use of and cost of interpreters in court.

What are the most common languages used the cases?

We receive monthly detailed reports about the languages used, and breakdown and percentage of the number of cases per language nationwide.

The top 5 languages requested are: Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian, Russian, and Mandarin (Chinese). We have seen a month on month increase in the volumes of requests for these 5 languages. The following are the volumes for the top 5 languages in 2007 (from March to December 2007) and their percentage of the total number of requests

Language Usage 2007

Language	Total	% of Total Bookings
Polish	1738	24.87%
Lithuanian	1295	18.53%
Romanian	1021	14.61%
Russian	747	10.69%
Mandarin	536	7.67%

We also translate some of our most commonly requested information leaflets into other languages such as French, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Are there times when an interpretative service has been requested but could not be fulfilled, or an interpreter was not available who could speak the language in question?

Almost never. There have been a very small number of occasions where the service was requested and could not be delivered immediately. The main reasons were the short notice we are in a position to give for the requirement to have someone attend in court. In such cases although interpreters are available

from Lionbridge, it is not always physically possible for them to arrive at the court at such short notice.

We are sometimes made aware of the language requirements of defendants/witnesses not only at very short notice but sometimes only when they are already in court. Therefore it is not always possible to have an interpreter in that specific language, immediately available to that specific court – indeed it would be impossible for it to be so.

In a very small number of cases, due to the rarity of the language requested, the case would be adjourned to source an interpreter.

How has reaction been to the new service – has there been an easy transition?

In 2007 Lionbridge provided interpreters to 129 different locations in the courts system nationwide. The number of complaints was less than 1% of the total number of requests. These were primarily due to teething issues in introducing a brand new nationwide service and a new system for booking interpreters, and communication issues. Even with this small number of normal start-up issues, the interpretation service has maintained a satisfaction rating of better than 99.5%.

The vast majority of occasions in which an interpreter is used pose no issue or problems in the understanding of the process by those involved. Where an issue of a lack of clarity or understanding arises, the dynamic of the court setting makes this apparent. On these rare occasions the interpreter is replaced.

Are there any protocols in place regarding the use of interpreters?

We've recently issued a protocol and guidance note to judges, registrars and courts staff to enable them make best use of the services of interpreters. This includes notes on the interpreters responsibilities, the interpretation mode we use, the responsibilities of the staff, and guidance to judges relating to issues such as the length of evidence and legal argument before an interpreter is asked to interpret; or when the interpreter may need a briefing regarding a type of case such as cases involving specific medical or technical evidence or cases involving minors.

How many interpreters are currently employed in this work? Are other languages being considered for introduction regarding interpretation in courts?

The Courts Service is informed by Lionbridge that they currently engage with 1,200 interpreters. This number is always increasing as their recruitment efforts are ongoing nationwide.

In 2007, Lionbridge provided interpretation services to the courts in 75 languages. New languages are introduced as they are requested. Lionbridge and the Courts Service make all efforts possible to meet any new requirement. Introducing new languages is based on demand. As Lionbridge currently has interpreters covering over 175 languages we are well positioned to meet any increasing demand.

How much money is invested in this much needed service?

In 2007 the Courts Service invested over €2 million in interpretation services. In 2008 we expect that figure to rise above €2.5 million.

Qualification Levels

The following are the qualification levels specified to Lionbridge as the goal for interpreters – with an emphasis on level three and four in the more commonly used languages.

Level 1: The person can be shown to be competent in both English and the language concerned.

Level 2: The person is a native speaker of the language concerned and can be shown to be competent in English or is a native speaker of English and can be shown to be competent in the language concerned.

Level 3: The person is a native speaker of English with a third level qualification in the language concerned or a native speaker of the language concerned with a third level qualification in English.

Level 4: The person has Level 3 qualifications plus qualifications specific to translating or interpreting.

Still making progress on the buildings front

There's plenty going on in the world of court buildings as **Shay Kirk** of our Estates & Buildings Business Unit explains.

Major improvements have been made in the standard of many county town courthouses which have been refurbished and extended since 1999. This means that every county town in Ireland will soon have a fine court building with the most modern facilities. We've started work in Kilkenny and later this year work will commence on the refurbishment of Monaghan and Mullingar courthouses. Planning will commence soon on Wexford, Wicklow and Waterford and sites are actively being sought for new Courthouses in Roscommon, Tralee and Galway.

While we've achieved a lot in county towns I'm glad to be able to say that we can make inroads into the courthouses in smaller towns and smaller venues – places where no major development work has been undertaken for years. Thanks to new arrangements with the Office of Public Works we've been able to fast-track a number of smaller projects and work will commence later this year at Manorhamilton, Swinford and Youghal while planning commenced recently on Macroom, Ballinamore, New Ross, Enniscorthy, Carndonagh and Birr. Further smaller venues will come on stream over the coming months and years.

Courts Service expenditure on buildings to date has been in the region of €200 million. As published in 2007, the National Development Plan will provide us with €500 million for the period from 2007 to 2013 for capital expenditure including Buildings and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The spend on Public Private Partnership projects will be about €160 million leaving approximately

€270 million for our Capital Building Programme and the balance on ICT.

The building programme was reviewed recently and 70 further projects where new or upgrade of facilities are needed were identified. Planning has already commenced on many of these. Three will be provided by way of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) project – new courthouses at Letterkenny and Limerick, an extension to Cork District Court and a new courthouse in Drogheda as part of an OPW PPP project to provide decentralised offices.

We've come a long way since the Courts Service was established in 1999 but there's still plenty of work to be done, particularly at smaller venues.

We've developed a courthouse design guide in consultation with users which takes account of the variety of needs. Many relate to privacy and security with accessibility high on the agenda together with the need to provide modern facilities for all who use the courts including the judiciary, staff, legal practitioners, jurors, victims of crime, witnesses, the general public, An Garda Síochána and the Prison Service. We're continuing to work to improve facilities for all court users while at the same time provide a legacy of fine buildings for the people of Ireland.

We've come a long way since the Courts Service was established in 1999 but there's still plenty of work to be done, particularly at smaller venues.



4 July 2007



17 September 2007



6 November 2007



21 December 2007

Rising from the shadows of **THE PHOENIX**

As our pictures show the Criminal Courts Complex, being built adjacent to the Phoenix Park, is ahead of schedule and is rising over the skyline (rather than from ashes like the mythical bird the park is named after). The circular 22 courtroom complex was started 12 months ago and is proving to be a most interesting build. Our time dated pictures capture in sequence from the ground being broken to the end of last month when the shape and scale of the complex started to become apparent. We also include an image of what the finished building might look like at night.

The project is due for completion in early 2010. Courts Service News will keep you updated on this over coming issues.



29 May 2008

Fixing & Avoiding Workplace Strife

Conflicts in the workplace can cause unhappiness and stress and place a considerable strain on staff performance and in their personal lives. Needless to say, maintaining a positive atmosphere is in everyone's interests. But how is that done? **Luke O'Neill** looks at mediation in the workplace and reports on some recent developments at the Central Partnership Committee.

Mediation

One method of maintaining good communications and avoiding possible industrial relations problems was discussed at a recent 'Lunch n' Learn' talk, given by Peadar Ward of the Courts Service Estates and Buildings Business Unit. He outlined the process of mediation in the workplace. This route can provide a more satisfactory outcome to the parties and lessen the drain on an organisation's resources.

The fast changing nature of the modern workplace means that traditional grievance procedures can be outdated. They tend to be slow and bureaucratic. The prescribed nature of the process also means that the possible outcomes are limited, which often leads to one side 'winning' or in some cases both 'losing'.

Workplace conflicts vary in type and intensity. Bullying, harassment and discrimination are among the

more serious problems. Personality clashes, stress, the selection of one person for promotion over another and performance issues are others. In some cases, a simple unresolved misunderstanding left to fester can cause problems in the office. While every scenario is different, mediation provides a route in all of the above.

Peadar used an orange as an illustrative aid to show mediation's particular approach to conflict. What is most likely to happen if the dispute over the orange was to go to court? It would be split 50/50 on many occasions. By following traditional grievance procedures one party could get the whole orange, leaving the other with

nothing. A mediation session can ask the right questions, finding out why the parties want the orange. One may want it for its skin; the other for its zest. So 'win-win' outcomes can happen.

One of the core strengths of workplace mediation lies in its ability to come to the problem early. Early intervention provides a greater chance of resolution, owing to greater dialogue, more understanding and the emphasis of mutual respect between parties. It's a voluntary and confidential process that imposes no fixed solution. The parties are encouraged to focus on the key issues and to manage their emotions with the final aim of reaching a satisfactory agreement.

Mediation is not a panacea. The mental and emotional state of the parties has to be considered, as do various other factors. Examples of this could be; one party may be on medication; if the conflict has been going on for a very long time then it

A mediation session can ask the right questions, finding out why the parties want the orange. One may want it for its skin; the other for its zest. So 'win-win' outcomes can happen.



can be difficult to repair relations; there may be a large power imbalance between the parties, for example between clerical officers and CEOs; or previous efforts to resolve may have failed; or the parties might simply have no common ground.

But before anything happens both parties must agree to participate and their expectations must be realistic. Ground rules are agreed. Both sides have the opportunity to relay their version of the problem and to respond to one another's perspective. The event is summarised and options towards a sustainable and flexible resolution for the future are examined.

Partnership – leading to and maintaining industrial relations peace

The Courts Service maintains a fine record in the area of industrial disputes since its establishment in 1999. This was achieved in an atmosphere of change where a new organisation was being established, a lot was asked of staff and old ways were being replaced. Thus a situation for possible uncomfortable relations and reactions existed: yet much has been achieved through many processes, involving leaps of faith and imagination, and without direct conflict or any industrial

Benefits of Mediation

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ Low cost | ■ Two winners |
| ■ Confidential | ■ Outcome |
| ■ Agreed/joint solution | customised to meet needs of the parties |
| ■ Parties have control over the outcome | ■ Flexible/creative solutions facilitated |
| ■ Normal dialogue | |

disputes. Much of the credit for that record has been attributed to the partnership process.

Recently, a formal review of partnership structures was carried out and considered by the Central Partnership Committee. The Regional Partnership Committees are to continue following very positive responses. The Dublin Partnership Committee is to be re-established. Three new committees are to be established.

The first will assist Nuala McLoughlin, Director of Supreme and High Court Operations, with the preparation of a new Customer Service Action Plan. A second will focus on the Internal Customer Service Plan while the third will be charged with assisting the project manager in managing the transition to a single unified Criminal Courts office at the new Criminal Court Complex.

The partnership structures of the Courts Service are regarded as a model within the Public Service.

Over the past few years members were asked to address private and public sector conferences organised by the National Centre for Partnership and Performance. The partnership programme also continues to play an important role in assisting with the ongoing modernisation programme. While partnership is a requirement under successive National Pay Agreements, including Towards 2016, it has been embraced by the staff of the service and it provides the Service with many rewards.

It maintains a gender balance, with representatives from every court jurisdiction, grade and geographical area. The Central Committee is chaired by the CEO and meetings are attended by HR Director and the Personnel Officer. Membership includes representatives of management, trade unions, staff and regions with everybody having an equal voice.

The partnership process is open to all staff. Indeed, staff are actively encouraged to volunteer for the three new committees or any other committees that are set up in the future.

Staff interested in volunteering for any of the Partnership Committees described above should contact Lauri Walsh or Emer Darcy of Human Resources.





Members of the Judiciary, Minister Dermot Ahern, invited guests and Courts Service staff at the official opening of Ardee Courthouse.

High Court sits in newly opened ARDEE COURTHOUSE

The provision of new court facilities around the country allows an increasing range of court business to be dealt with. Ardee in County Louth is more usually associated with the District Court. However the provision of a new courthouse at the Mid-Louth Civic Services Centre will be used by the High Court in the coming weeks. **Gerry Curran** reports on the official opening and tells of plans for future use.

For Minister for Justice, Equality, and Law Reform, Mr. Dermot Ahern T.D., it was his first official engagement with the Courts Service. President of the Circuit Court, Mr. Justice Matthew Deery presided at the opening of the courthouse which forms part a €4.7m Civic Centre, with offices for Louth County Council and the Office of Public Works.

President Deery said that, "the opening of this fine facility is a good day for the people of Ardee and those who use the court here. The finished project you see here today is in keeping with the ongoing modernisation of the courts."

He announced that "as well as the usual and expected court business which is planned for this courthouse, the President of the High Court has decided to use this new premises and its fine facilities to bring the High Court to Ardee for the first time in the history of the State. This is not just a 'one off' or ceremonial sitting but in the coming

weeks, full hearings and cases of the High Court will be transferred here to make best use of this new resource."

Ardee courthouse is an architecturally dynamic building that is integrated into the adjoining public park. It has been designed using sustainable materials and technologies, creating a healthy and comfortable environment for its occupants.





Above: Minister for Justice Equality and Law Reform Mr Dermot Ahern T.D. and top: President Matthew Deery.



Minister Ahern said that "concentrating the offices of Louth County Council, Ardee Town Council, the Office of Public Works and the Courthouse on one site makes sound economic sense and presents an excellent example of how State agencies can work together to provide services locally in a cost effective manner."

He went on to say, "aside from the convenience of having all these services in one accessible site, this complex reduces the environmental impact of housing them. The sensitive way in which the design complements its surroundings is enhanced by the use of wood and other natural materials. I am particularly struck by the way in which the Centre blends with and enhances its

surroundings, particularly the adjoining 'Fair Green' park."

"This development offers clear proof that improving our public infrastructure and protecting our environment can go hand-in-hand. The court is moving from a castle

dating back to the 13th century to a complex that belongs emphatically to the Ireland of today. Since its foundation, the Courts Service has made great progress in improving the stock of courthouses around the country."

Ardee courthouse is an architecturally dynamic building that is integrated into the adjoining public park. It has been designed using sustainable materials and technologies



At official opening in Ardee from left Brendan Cleary, Chief Clerk, Denise Clerkin, Elaine Clarke all from Dundalk District Court office and Gay Berkery retired Chief Clerk and Alice Hennessy Chief Clerk Monaghan Circuit Court office.

Training Day for Court Registrars

A conference for Court Registrars of all grades from the Eastern, Midland and Northern Regions was held in Mullingar recently. This was the first time in these Regions that court going staff came together on a formal basis. We spoke to Eastern Regional Manager, Gerry Nugent after a very successful day.

The response was magnificent. Attendance was subscribed to such an extent that a second session is planned for later in 2008 to accommodate those who couldn't attend. Almost every office, Circuit Court and District Court, was represented, with 80 court registrars present on the day, including some from Dublin. All court going grades were represented, from Executive Officer to Assistant Principal."

Giving one of his last presentations, soon to retire Director of Circuit and District Court Operations, Diarmaid MacDiarmada, noted that it was the first time he could recall having attended such an event. "The Courts Service owes a huge compliment to court registrars who provide a first class service to thousands of court users every day," he said. He went on to note that in the Circuit and District Courts, registrars deal with people of all nationalities, and with a diverse range of stakeholders including the judiciary, Gardai and the Prison Escort Service.

Director of Finance, Sean Quigley discussed both the new Courts Service Strategic Plan and the issue of Risk Management. The new Strategic Plan was the subject of well informed debate. The level of interest was such that it is now proposed to have special Strategic Plan workshops in each Region for staff in the coming weeks.

Noel A. Doherty, Principal Officer, Directorate of Reform and Development, gave a fascinating and informative presentation on the Criminal Justice Act, 2006. "The level of interest in this was such that the entire day could have been spent on this topic alone," Gerry Nugent points out. "Feedback from the conference highlighted that briefing sessions such as that from Noel are of significant benefit."

Darach Green, Principal Officer and Ciaran Caverly, Assistant Principal, both of the ICT Directorate explained the new Digital Audio Recording system, currently being piloted in a number of courtrooms across the country. High Court

Examiner, Jim Finn, followed with details of the proposed Civil Case Management system.

"Feedback indicated that the initiative was very worthwhile," Gerry says. "Staff were afforded an opportunity to meet in a formal setting to discuss and debate matters of legislative importance and issues surrounding change within the Courts Service. It's worth mentioning that the social benefits were not lost on those who arrived in Mullingar the evening before. A number of people discovered singing voices that had been in storage for some time!!"

And a word of thanks from Gerry. "I'd like to thank the staff in the Midland, Northern and Eastern Regional Offices who organised the event – great credit is due to them for their efforts. The speakers and contributors gave their valuable time without complaint and the quality of the presentations was particularly high. Lastly, the entire day would not have taken place without the commitment and enthusiasm of all the registrars who turned up. In an environment of ever increasing demands on official time, we appreciate that each of them made the effort to make the conference such a success."



Rita Monaghan and Aisling Smith, Mullingar District Court.



Trim District Court joint Chief Clerks, Noreen Halpin and Audrey Cadden.

Commission makes Restorative Justice recommendations

Report highlights the use of various forms of restorative Justice internationally

The implementation of pilot restorative justice schemes in inner city areas and the widening of case tracking data collection are two of the main recommendations in a recent interim report published by the National Commission on Restorative Justice (NCRJ) as **Luke O'Neill** reports.

NCRJ – which was established in March 2007 under the chair of Judge Mary Martin – makes note in its report of the Adult Cautioning Scheme and suggests that it could also adopt restorative principles. An Garda Síochána's experience in delivering its Youth Diversion Programme may be beneficial in that context.

At prison stage, the report recommends the possible establishment of a pilot focussing on a small number of suitable prisoners at a pre-release stage at the request of victim, offender, or both. Such a pilot would be limited to 12 cases over two-years. The report adds that care should be taken to avoid revictimisation as a result of victim participation in any proposed pilot.

The Commission says how restorative justice is provided is a major issue it faces. Under consideration is whether one organisation should be charged with this area or whether it should be spread across existing organisations.

Restorative justice describes the attempt to bring victims, offenders and the community together in an attempt to resolve the impact of crime together.

NCRJ is also considering at what stage of the criminal justice process restorative justice could apply (pre-charge, pre-conviction, pre-sentence or post-sentence).

"Today's report gives us some very positive information and the Commission will now continue its work to finalise its thinking on how

best we might seek to expand the use of restorative justice," said Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Mr. Dermot Ahern T.D., of the report's publication. "We must look at all aspects and come to a clear view on how restorative justice might be applied in this jurisdiction."

Some 80 countries apply diverse forms of restorative justice in addressing crime. The report highlights the use of various forms of restorative justice – such as victim/offender mediation and conferencing and sentencing circles.

Restorative justice describes the attempt to bring victims, offenders and the community together in an attempt to resolve the impact of crime together. Research has shown that restorative justice can reduce re-offending rates and can give victims greater satisfaction with the criminal justice system.

Some 80 countries apply diverse forms of restorative justice in addressing crime. The report highlights the use of various forms of restorative justice – such as victim/offender mediation and conferencing and sentencing circles – in New Zealand, Australia and Canada. It notes that the variety of international approaches makes it "hard to capture the essence of a uniformly effective model." In Canada, at least 12 distinct models of restorative justice are identified.

NCRJ will make its final report next year.



A juror's story

We have often brought you jury news from Ireland and around the world. This time a Juror, a retired special education teacher, who served on a jury in Dublin recently tells us of his experience.

When the Circuit Criminal Court Jury Summons arrived, it seemed an acceptable demand on my civic duty. Failure to attend without reasonable excuse would entail a fine of €63.49.

The courtroom held about 200 people. A court official read a list of numbers and names. We went downstairs to a waiting room. At no time did any panel/jury member have to establish identity. The extensive categories of ineligible and excusable persons make a jury truly representative of society, very difficult. There was little conversation, rather an air of uncertainty, as the atmosphere became increasingly sticky.

A TV monitor focussed on a judge in a courtroom. He said jury panels were about to be empanelled. His instructions were clear and precise. We learned the details of the charges to be tried and the identity of the accused. Twenty names were drawn from a drum in the courtroom and those chosen went upstairs. The defence was entitled to object to seven of those without cause. Jurors could seek abstention from the judge, with his decision made public. Three juries were empanelled that morning, before the rest of us were released.

The next morning saw a repeat process with two juries being empanelled. The third morning saw some fraternisation among the panel as we waited, watching the monitors. I heard my name called at number 17. The courtroom was full of people - barristers, lawyers, prison officers, gardai, court officials. I asked to take the oath in Irish but none was available. The new jury was then charged by the judge and instructed on our important and onerous function. He read the charges as we looked across the room at the accused. A Garda was sworn in as jury minder and we were escorted upstairs to the jury room. Our first duty was to elect a foreman from the ten men and two women. We spent about ten minutes discussing the matter and as nobody was willing to act, I volunteered.

As the case continued we were escorted to the Kings Inns for lunch on three days. The third day was spent looking at a video of one of the Garda interviews with the accused. This proved

upsetting for the accused and the jury. The fourth day was spent with the prosecution and defence, making final submissions. The judge summed up and we began our deliberation at 13.45. The moment we all had been dreading had arrived. We had the charge sheets, copies of the interviews and other exhibits of evidence. We poured over the interviews in great detail. We went down to the court several times for clarification on points of law. After several hours the judge offered to accept a majority verdict of ten to two. Such a verdict appeared to be very distant as we were split, eight to four, after some robust debate. As the evening wore on and the Four Courts emptied and the noise from the builders' machinery quietened, we felt we were stuck as the discussion flowed to and fro. It became clear that some jurors had been discomforted by the apparent playful familiarity between opposing counsel. Several of the jurors proved excellent at raising queries and teasing out matters of import. As we approached eight o'clock the vote appeared to change to nine to three. The judge then sent us to a hotel for the night. Four Gardai were sworn in to accompany us. Back in the jury room our mobile phones were returned to us, to make essential calls.

Our destination remained a secret, until we arrived at the hotel. There we had dinner and three complimentary drinks. Security was tight. As I went into the car park to get some air, a Garda immediately joined me. On the two occasions I took the lift to my room, a Garda escorted me. We arrived back in the jury room hopeful of reaching a verdict. Discussion resumed as we again analysed the interview notes. Then very quietly we achieved a ten to two verdict. A muted sense of elation pervaded the room momentarily. Then there was an eerie quiet.

As I returned the verdict, I saw tears flow from the accused. Defence Counsel congratulated their colleagues. The judge thanked us for our careful deliberation and released us from the panel. We could not get away quickly enough from each other and the Four Courts, having done our difficult duty.

International Association for Court Administration Conference – Dublin 2008

The Third Conference of the International Association for Court Administration took place in the Conference Centre in Dublin Castle recently. Founded in 2005, the Association promotes improved court management and administration in all countries and fosters professionalism and collegiality among those who serve in court systems throughout the world.

Around 220 delegates from over 40 different countries including the United States, Canada, Mexico, Australia, Abu Dhabi, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Moldova attended. Also among the attendance were delegates from the Northern Ireland Courts Service and the Courts Service. Chief Justice John L. Murray welcomed the delegates at a reception held in the Round Hall of the Four Courts and opened the conference the following day. In doing so, the Chief Justice wished the delegates well in their deliberations and said that he looked forward to participating in the conference.

The conference comprised of a number of panel sessions and a

series of workshops. Topics for the panel sessions included "Technological Innovations in the Courts" (with the participation by video conference of the Honorable Richard Magnus, Chief Judge of the Subordinate Courts of Singapore), "The Role of Effective Court Administration in Achieving Justice," on which the Chief Justice and the CEO of the Courts Service, P.J. Fitzpatrick spoke. The last topic "Achieving Justice in States Torn by Civil Turmoil," attracted contributions by senior members of the judiciary of Afghanistan, Lebanon and Palestine, and the Attorney General of Rwanda.

A presentation on Innovations in



Noel A Doherty.



Chief Justice John L. Murray with delegates at the IACA conference.

Public Service Outreach was made by Judge Kari Tartainen of Finland.

The workshops covered the themes of "Utilisation of Weighted Caseload Analysis Techniques," "Case Assignment Systems," "Conversion Planning from Paper to Electronic Filing," and "Addressing Sources of Delay in Case Processing."

Markus Zimmer, President of the Association, expressed his appreciation to the Chief Justice and the Courts Service for facilitating the conference. Feedback from delegates was that this was the most successful conference so far, providing fresh impetus for the activities of the association and further enhancing its reach internationally.

For further information on the International Association for Court Administration, see its website at www.iaca.ws.

Evidence from Omagh bombing civil action heard in Dublin

A civil action taken in Northern Ireland by relatives of the Omagh bombing victims made history when it transferred from the High Court in Belfast to the Four Courts to facilitate the hearing of evidence from members of an Garda Síochána last month. It was the first time that a Northern Irish court heard evidence in Ireland.

Twelve relatives of victims of the Omagh bomb have taken the civil action against Seamus McKenna, John Michael McKeivitt, Liam Campbell, Michael Colm Murphy and Seamus Daly. The action by six families is against the men they believe are responsible for the Real IRA attack which

killed 29 people, including a woman pregnant with twins. No-one has ever been convicted of their murders.

29 Garda witnesses gave evidence between 12th and 15th May, while a further 21 gave evidence between 27th and 29th May. Trial Judge Sir Declan Morgan – who is presiding over the case at Belfast Crown Court – heard submissions from the defendants' barristers in Dublin. The presiding Judge for the taking of evidence was Judge Conal Gibbons of the District Court.

The Courts Service and the Northern Ireland Court Service cooperated to facilitate the hearings.



Justice Declan Morgan (NI).

Cheers all round as Courts Accounting Project wins award



There were whoops and cheers when Courts Service Director of Finance, Sean Quigley stepped forward to accept a Public Service Excellence Award for the Courts Accounting Project from An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern T.D. in Dublin Castle recently.

It was just recognition for the huge effort by staff in Dublin and all around the country to deliver this Project which has seen the total modernisation of courts accounting techniques and the introduction of IT systems for court financial transactions. This in turn has allowed the payment of family law payments by electronic transfer, the Small Claims Online system to process electronic payments, and the current pilot and future national rollout of the payment of fines online.

The Public Service Excellence Awards are organised every two years by the Department of An Taoiseach to award projects and initiatives that have enhanced the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services and administration in Ireland. They are seen as a central step in promoting the principal aim of the Quality Customer Service Initiative, which is the provision of a consistently high level of service to customers of the Public Service.

The 20 award winning projects were selected by an independent selection committee, chaired by Professor Mary Daly of University College Dublin and assisted by:

- Ms. Catherine Byrne, ICTU
- Mr. Jim Duffy, Assistant Secretary, Department of Finance
- Mr. Liam Dunbar, former Chief Executive of St. James's Hospital
- Mr. John Fitzgerald, Chairman of An Post
- Dr. Peter Humphreys, Executive Director of Research at the IPA
- Mr. Philip Kelly, Assistance Secretary, Department of An Taoiseach
- Ms. Berenice O'Neill, former Refugee Applications Commissioner

This is the second Public Service Excellence Award for the Courts Service. The Commercial Court Project was a winner in 2006.



Courts Accounting Team pictured with former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern TD.



Sean Quigley Director of Finance and Shay Keary Courts Accounting Team at the Excellence Awards.

Going back to your roots

Genealogy is one of the top ten hobbies in the world. For anyone thinking of tracing their family tree, there is one cardinal rule – start with what you know. **Caroline McCall** of the High Court Probate Office has some handy tips on getting started.

Doing the homework is the first step in most family trees. Ask your parents or elderly relatives about their childhood memories. Where did they live? How many were in the family? What were their occupations? Ask open questions and allow them to talk. Bring a tape or digital recorder with you. And don't forget to look at the family album.

Be Honest

There is always a skeleton or two lurking in every family closet and it is the black sheep of the family that are often the most fascinating. In Ireland family scandals tend to relate to the Civil War, foundling children, or even service in the Royal Irish Constabulary. These may seem like ancient history now but for elderly relatives they can still represent a source of hurt or shame, so be sensitive to their feelings.

Arm yourself with some hardback notebooks. Make notes of what archives you visit, what you searched, and what you found – even when you have a bad day and find nothing useful. Almost all archives have a policy of no pens allowed; most allow laptops. Make sure to write up your findings every day – or at least once a week, while things are still fresh in your mind. Use the Internet as a signpost not a Bible. You don't want to base your research on someone else's research if it's inaccurate.

Access Original Sources

The National Archives (NAI) and National Library (NLI) have a tremendous range of genealogical



The National Archives (NAI) and National Library (NLI) have a tremendous range of genealogical information and provide free genealogy advice services.

information and provide free genealogy advice services. The National Library has a vast collection of Catholic parish registers – some going back to the 18th Century. The National Archives holds the 1901 and 1911 Census of Population, Land Records, Wills, School Records, Prison Records, and Marriage Licence Bonds. County Libraries often hold collections of material relating to a particular locality as well as old newspapers and street directories. The Representative Church Body Library (RCBL) at Braemor Park,

Dublin, holds Parish Records for over 800 Church of Ireland parishes – see their website for further details.

If you are seeking a way to record and organise the results of your research, both www.familysearch.org and www.irishancestries.com provide free forms and guides. If you are really bitten by the bug, try some of the free shareware or trial packages available with genealogy magazines.

Be prepared to get readers' cards for the various Archives and Libraries and don't forget your local library. Genealogy books can be expensive, and some are only found in the reference section. Try to avail of inter-library loans. The National Library of Ireland is a copyright library and should have access to all books published in Ireland and the UK.

Census Records

The Census of Population for Dublin for 1911 is available free online on the NAI website. Check their website for details of when other counties will be released. Microfilm copies for the 1901 and 1911 Census are available at the NAI in Bishop Street, Dublin. When checking the individual household returns don't forget to check the enumerators' street returns, which contain information on the type of housing, number of rooms they lived in, and whether they shared a home with another family. Bear in mind that the ages of individuals can often be wrong. When you are estimating marriage and birth dates for later research, make sure to search two or three years on either side of an age given on a Census form.



The censuses for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 were completely destroyed during the Civil War when the Public Records Office was burned. The census records for 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 had already been destroyed before then, by Government order. Some fragments do survive, relating mainly to Northern counties. Other Census fragments which survive are called the 'Green Pages' and these records relate to the introduction of the Old Age Pension in 1906.

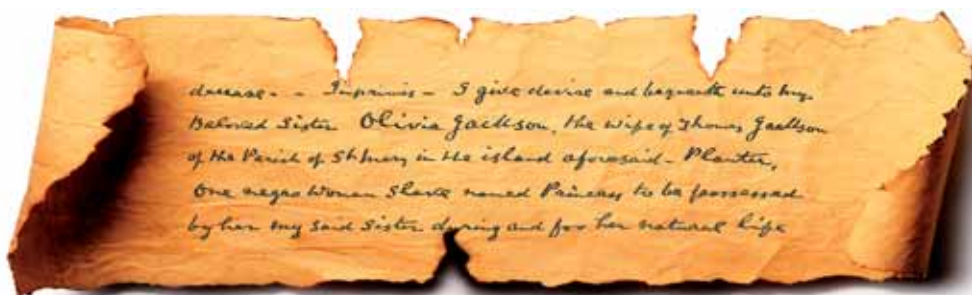
General Registrars Office – Search Room

Another important source for genealogy research is the Birth, Marriage and Death Records of the General Registrars Office. Their search room is located in the Irish Life Mall in Abbey Street, Dublin. Statutory registration of all births, marriages and deaths began in 1864.

If you have an unusual surname, searching should be simple. However, with surnames like Murphy or McCarthy you will discover multiple entries. One trick is to start with the family member with the most unusual Christian name. If you find that this certificate is correct, then you have successfully identified the registration district, and it should make finding the rest of the family a little easier.

Townland and village names recorded on certificates can be hard to decipher. Research the website at www.irishancestries.com, which has a free 'place name' search facility to help you identify those obscure place names.

A marriage certificate is probably the most useful one for genealogical



Extract from Edward Verdon's will dated 1766

research because of the sheer amount of information it contains, and its direct link to the previous generation. Watch out for the witnesses as they can be brothers, sisters or even the parents of the bride and groom. If you still can't find the certificate under the surname being searched, perhaps you need to try variations in the spelling of the surname. Has a Mc or an O been added or dropped or perhaps the event has been registered late?

Griffiths Valuation of Ireland

When you have exhausted the records of the General Registrars Office and the 1901 and 1911 Census Records, have a look at Census substitutes. The most accessible of these is Griffiths Valuation or the Primary Valuation of Land which is available on microfilm in the NAI and NLI. It is also available online for a fee at www.irishorigins.com. This survey was part of a reform of local taxation in Ireland between 1848 and 1864 and lists every landowner and householder in Ireland.

Tithe Applotment Books

Tithes were a tax payable by landholders to support the Established Church of Ireland. The taxes were bitterly resented and perceived as unfair. In the absence

of Census or other sources, the Tithe Books are often the only record available for poor families in the early 19th Century. Microfilm copies of the Tithe Books are available in the NAI and NLI.

Parish Registers

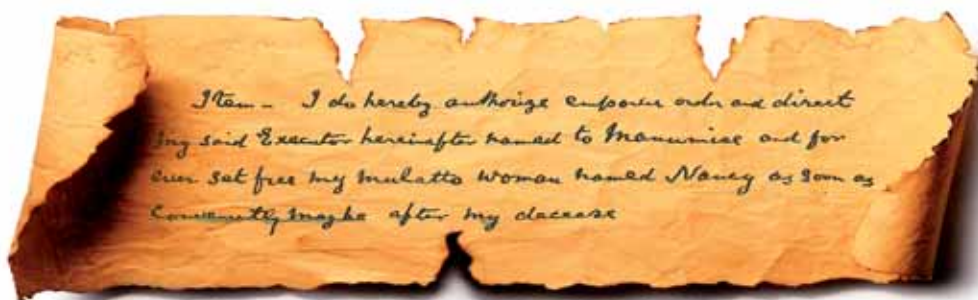
The vast majority of surviving Catholic Parish Registers relate to the first half of 19th century. Records in the bigger cities can go back to the late 17th or early 18th centuries but these are the exception rather than the rule. It is for this reason alone that people tracing their family tree in Ireland are lucky to get back beyond 1800. Microfilm copies of the majority of surviving Parish Registers are available in the NLI.

Wills and Testamentary Documents

Before 1900 only one in twelve people made a will. Before 1858, Wills were administered through the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Established Church of Ireland. After 1858 a Principal Probate Registry was established with local District Registries around the country. These produced annual Calendars of Wills and Administrations and are available for viewing on the open shelves of the NAI.

When you've got it all done – found all the lost sheep, and have written it up – what's next? Share it. For your nearest and dearest it's possible to have your research hardback bound for about 30 euro. An inexpensive alternative is copying it onto a CD and sending it with your Christmas cards – much better than a pair of socks!

May I wish you all happy hunting – see you in the Archives!



Extract from Edward Verdon's will dated 1766





Above: Ciara Doyle and above right: the winners Ciara Doyle and Jennifer Murphy.

SMILES ALL ROUND for winners of mock trials

Pupils from St Leo's of Carlow left the Four Courts as happy litigants, victors, champions and school of the year recently. The school had come out top in the National Mock Trial competition, which involved 500 plus young people coming to the centre of the legal world, to compete in this most popular of transition year competitions.

Having just launched its CSPE schools legal curriculum/ resource pack and DVD (Let's Look at the Law), which includes highlights of previous years' mock trials as a teaching aid, the Courts Service continued its support for this competition with an increased input and contribution, with almost the entirety of the Four Courts building being given over to the proceedings.

Public Access to Law organised this the ninth national competition, which was launched by Mr. Justice Paul Carney and the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Mr. Eamon Ryan T.D. The event was co-sponsored by the Courts Service, the Bar Council, the Kings Inns and

Independent Colleges – making a magic day-out for the hundreds of young people who engaged in much activity.

This included not only acting as prosecutors, defence teams, witnesses, court staff, Gardai and jurors, but parallel competitions saw students starring as court reporters for TV and newspapers. Gerry Curran of the Courts Service Media Relations Office coached and judged the TV reporters. Dearbhail Mc Donald, Legal Affairs Editor of the Irish Independent, gave a crash course in court reporting and judged the newspaper reporters section. Other elements of the competition saw students competing in photojournalist and sketch artist competitions – creating a visual record of the court cases they were covering.

All in all it was a very eventful two days – with many hundreds of young people now more aware of what happens in our courts and maybe thinking “I could work there some day” – or maybe not...



Pictured above: participants in the mock trials 2008 competition.

NEW PUBLICATIONS TO ASSIST HIGH COURT LITIGANTS

Recent Courts Service publications throw useful light on some of the lesser known areas of the High Court.

Explaining 'mortgage suits'

A leaflet on mortgage suits will be of interest to practitioners and litigants alike. It sets out the implications of a well charging order and outlines the steps involved in progressing this form of litigation through the Office of the Examiner of the High Court.

"The number of new mortgage suits referred to the Examiner's Office in the first half of 2008 equalled the total received in 2007 so the publication of this leaflet is quite timely," says High Court Examiner Jim Finn. "While the number of mortgage suits in the High Court is relatively low (about 10 – 20 new cases each year), the proceedings have a huge impact on the parties involved".

A mortgage suit is a form of proceeding taken by the holder of a security on property (usually a judgment mortgage or equitable mortgage) to recover a debt by forcing a sale of that property.

Report of Courts Accountant shows increase in investments

Total investments managed by the High Court Accountant's Office in 2007 went over €1 billion for the first time according to the latest Report and Financial Statements of the Office.



In his foreword, President of the High Court and Chairman of the Investment Committee Mr. Justice Richard Johnson noted that investment performance was down on the previous year. "However given the turbulence in global financial markets, particularly in the second half of 2007, the overall investment performance was satisfactory," he said.

Very good progress was made during the year in progressing the transfer of minor's funds from the Circuit and District Courts, which is part of the overall modernisation programme for the management and investment of court funds. This work will be completed during this year.

Copies of the Report are available from: The Accountant's Office, The Courts Service, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. Tel: (01) 888 6211/6214.

The Report is also available online at www.courts.ie

A window on the world of bankruptcy

The two High Court offices involved in the bankruptcy process explain their respective parts in this commonly known but little understood area of the law in some recent publications. Bankruptcy proceedings are commenced in the Office of the Examiner of the High Court. A new leaflet focuses on the role of the Office which is the court support office to the bankruptcy court. "Our leaflet features some common questions we receive about bankruptcy and will be of use to practitioners and to the general public," according to Jim Finn.

The Office of the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy enters the frame once the court has declared a person to be a bankrupt. "Our booklet sets out general

information on this area and answers the most frequent questions we receive from the wide variety of people we regularly deal with," says Deputy Official Assignee Geraldine Hurley.

"Bankruptcy is a complex process for everyone involved – obviously including the bankrupt themselves. Bankrupts have obligations under the bankruptcy legislation and this booklet will hopefully answer some of their questions. It also deals with areas such as a bankrupt's family home and business dealings. Creditors are another group with an interest in how bankruptcy matters are dealt with, regardless of whether they are a large financial institution or smaller trade creditors."

Copies of the Examiner's Office publications are available from: The Examiner's Office, 2nd Floor, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. Tel: (01) 888 6222/6223/6269/6219. Email: examinersmail@courts.ie

Copies of the Official Assignee's Office publication is available from: The Office of the Official Assignee, 2nd Floor, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. Tel: (01) 888 6166. Email: officialassigneeinbankruptcy@courts.ie

The publications are also available on the Courts Service website, www.courts.ie.



Around the World: Centuries of Old Bailey cases go ONLINE

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey have been published online, providing details of trials between the period 1674 and 1913. Before the growth of newspapers, the so-called Proceedings provided the most regularly published accounts of business at the Central Criminal Court in London.

The vast online resource contains masses of information about trials, searchable by criteria such as offence, plea and verdict and also by place, name, age and gender. Animal theft, highway robbery and murder were the most common crimes tried. There are some fascinating insights into how court business was conducted.

For example, until 1858 juries would be kept without fire, food or drink until a verdict was agreed. Understandably, their decisions tended to take little time. Even then, the judge could query why they had reached one verdict over another or pressure them to reconsider.

Punishments were wide-ranging, with death an extremely common outcome. So common in fact, that a trial where a person was not condemned to death became known as a "maiden session."

Defendants who refused to enter a plea were, unless they were found mute "by visitation of God," subject to the ordeal of *peine forte et dure*, in which they were forced to lie down and have weights placed on them until they either relented or died. Though rare, the Proceedings for the trial of William Spigget and Thomas Phillips, accused of violent theft and highway robbery, shows the consequences of refusing to plead.

"That the Prisoner shall be sent to the Prison from whence he came, and put into a mean House, Stopped from Light, and there shall

be laid upon the bare Ground without any Litter, Straw or other Covering, and without any Garment about him, saving something to cover his Privy Members and that he shall lie upon his Back, and his Head shall be covered, and his Feet bare, and that one of his Arms shall be drawn with a Cord to one side of the House, and the other Arm to the other side, and that his Legs shall be used in the same manner, and that upon his Body shall be laid so much Iron and Stone as he can bear..."

Women who claimed they were pregnant at the time they were sentenced to death could "plead their belly." These women were examined by a jury of matrons (chosen from women present in court) and if movement could be detected, signalling the beginning of life, their punishment was respite until the birth.

This archive is a huge source of information about ordinary British life and behaviour. Given Ireland's historic trend of immigration, it also serves as a further resource for Irish people who are keen to track down relatives who may have moved to Britain. They might not be happy with what they find!



The Proceedings of the Old Bailey
[www.oldbaileyonline.org.uk/
index.jsp](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org.uk/index.jsp)

Obituaries



Anthony McCormack

Mr. Anthony McCormack who passed away late last year served as County Registrar in Roscommon Circuit Court office from 1967 to 1997. He practiced as a solicitor from 1955 to 1967 in his native Strokestown, Co. Roscommon. Anthony was held in high esteem by his colleagues and staff in the Circuit Court office. He had a thorough knowledge of criminal law and contributed much to the Circuit Court in Roscommon over his 30 years as County Registrar. He acted as Returning Officer at numerous elections and referenda over the years.

Anthony was a very popular man who loved sport, was a keen golfer and is a past President of Roscommon Golf Club. He was also an excellent bridge player. His removal and burial was very well attended by solicitors, members of the bar, Garda Síochána and the Roscommon Golf Club as well as former and present staff from the Circuit Court and District Court many of whom travelled distances to be with his family and friends.

We extend our sympathies to Anthony's wife Olivia, his sons Patrick and Alan, his daughters Edel, Sinead and Olivia and his grandchildren.

May he rest in peace.

Appointments



New District Court Judge

Mr. Kevin P. Kilrane has been appointed a Judge of the District Court. Judge Kilrane was admitted as a solicitor in 1976 and practiced until his appointment in the firm of Kevin P. Kilrane & Company in Mohill, Co. Leitrim. He will be assigned to District Number 1 (Co. Donegal).



New Judge of the High Court

Mr. Daniel O'Keefe, Senior Counsel has been appointed a Judge of the High Court.

Prior to his appointment, Judge O'Keefe, BCL, LL.B., and A.C.A. (1974) practised on the Dublin and South Western Circuits and specialised in Company Law and Tax Law. He had wide experience in the areas of Administrative Law, Judicial Review, Commercial/ Chancery Law, and general practice. He qualified as a barrister in 1964 and became a Senior Counsel in 1985.

Judge John Brophy retires

Many tributes were paid to Judge John Brophy when he sat for the last time in Trim District Court recently. President of the District Court Judge Miriam Malone joined Judge Thomas Fitzpatrick (who will replace Judge Brophy in Meath), Judge John Coughlan, Judge Gillian Hussey (who retired some years ago) and a host of others to recall Judge Brophy's long and valued career.

President Malone reminded all present that Judge Brophy had been a judge for over 17 years having been appointed to the Bench in 1990 and to the Meath District in 1991. She recalled a gentleman who was warm and kind and fair in his judgments. "He was courteous and showed humanity to those before him," she said. Judge Gillian Hussey pointed out that there is life after retirement as she wished the judge well.

The list of people who wanted to pay tribute to Judge Brophy was long and illustrated the high esteem in which he was held by those who worked in and attended his court. Meath County Registrar Mary O'Malley, Trim District Court joint Chief Clerk Noeleen Halpin and Director of Operations for the Circuit and District Courts Diarmaid MacDiarmada spoke on behalf of the staff of the Courts Service and recalled a man who was 'courteous, hard working and professional.' An



"It was an honour and a privilege to have been appointed a judge," Judge Brophy said when it came to his turn to respond, thanking all who had assisted him over the years.

Garda Síochána, the Probation Service, the Bar Council, the local Bar and local solicitors painted a picture of a man who could be tough and sometimes difficult but was a 'great pleasure to work with.'

"It was an honour and a privilege to have been appointed a judge," Judge Brophy said when it came to his turn to respond, thanking all who had assisted him over the years.

Staff Appointments



Margaret O'Neill, is acting Director of Circuit & District Operations, and Peadar Ward has moved to Estates & Buildings Business Unit.





From left Diarmaid MacDiarmada with staff from Circuit & District Operations.



Director of Corporate Services Brendan Ryan with Máire MacDiarmada.

Nostalgia in the air as **'Director Diarmaid'** takes his leave

Amusing, touching and sad were three sentiments which permeated the going away 'do' for Diarmaid MacDiarmada as he retired earlier this month. Having spent almost four decades in the courts serving as a District Court Clerk, an Examiner, Chief Examiner, head of the Dublin Metropolitan District, and, for the last nine years, Director of Operations for the Circuit and District Courts, Diarmaid amassed a wealth of experience and friends – which showed in the names and faces of those who attended the function from across the courts and country.

Courts Service CEO, PJ Fitzpatrick gave a thorough description of his interaction with and reliance on Diarmaid in the days when the Courts Service was being brought to life. He described his traits of wisdom, honesty, humour and loyalty and especially recalled the great sense and practicality Diarmaid brought to negotiations at times of great change and potential conflict.

Director of Corporate Services, Brendan Ryan spoke of his friendship with Diarmaid. "He was not a man for the 'management speak' and always brought a common sense approach to meetings and issues," he said. "He was great company and great fun and had a real love of the Irish language."

President of the Association of County Registrars, Susan Ryan said Diarmaid was a 'non interferer.' "He had a non invasive style which we all loved – it was very effective as it let us get on with the job." She said she wasn't just speaking for herself but on behalf of all County Registrars.

Assistant Commissioner of An Garda Síochána, Al McHugh attended with Inspector Ann Glennon from the Bridewell. Al said that, "I know Diarmaid nearly all my working life." He said

he first met him in Bridewell Courts many years ago and joked to much laughter that "he was pretty gruff then, there was no point asking for your case to be called first – it just didn't happen." As Assistant Commissioner he got to know Diarmaid pretty well since. "He was a fountain of knowledge and a rock of common sense. There's a very good relationship between An Garda Síochána and the Courts Service thanks to people like Diarmaid. We will miss him."

The man of the moment, in characteristic style, was warm, humorous and generous in his comments. He warned that "having heard all those nice words I'd nearly feel like changing my mind – but I won't so you're safe enough." He said that in the nearly 40 years in courts he had made many friendships that he hoped will last. He thanked everyone he could think of – staff in Dublin and all around the country (especially in C&D Operations and in particular Bernie Claffey for keeping the ship afloat when it was sinking!); Margaret O'Neill; the judiciary; the CEO; the Senior Management Team; Regional Managers; and County Registrars. He especially thanked his wife Máire for her support through the years.

He then went off to improve his golf, talk to the lollipop lady in the mornings and generally take it easy!

We wish Diarmaid and Máire all the very best for a long and happy retirement.

The man of the moment, in characteristic style, was warm, humorous and generous in his comments. He warned that "having heard all those nice words I'd nearly feel like changing my mind."

Barking up the right tree with used cartridges and mobile phones

Wondering what to do with used toners and cartridges, mobile phones, blankets or loose change? **Trevor Sweeney** of the District Court Small Claims Office in Dolphin House Dublin has some suggestions that will help you get rid of them and make life better for man's best friend.

'Dogs Trust' and 'Dogs in Distress' do amazing work on behalf of dogs all over the country. A healthy dog is never put down and through caring and fostering they work for the sheer love of animals and their welfare.

'Dogs Trust' is an international dog welfare charity who promote responsible ownership in Ireland through educational work in schools, a nationwide means-tested neutering scheme and through those who re-home dogs from pounds. They are about to build a state of the art re-homing

centre just off the Finglas exit of the M50 at a cost of £10 million sterling.

'Dogs in Distress' is a voluntary group who seek homes for dogs in pounds (mainly Dublin and Meath). Each year over 25,000 dogs end up in pounds in Ireland and over 15,000 of these are killed. Dogs are placed in foster homes where they receive veterinary care while the charity, mainly through their website, attempts to find the suitable homes for the dogs. Money raised funds veterinary treatment with volunteers covering other costs



including transport, food, and phone bills.

You can help these charities by donating printer cartridges, mobile phones, blankets or loose change. Find out more (including how you can sponsor a dog) by visiting: www.dogstrust.ie and www.dogsindistress.org.

Contact them directly or contact Trevor. Tel: (01) 888 6837. Email: trevorsweeney@courts.ie or deweeney@hotmail.com

Social News

Another successful *"Summer Evening in Smithfield"*

The recent summer evening provided a great opportunity for retired members of the judiciary and Courts Service staff to renew acquaintances and enjoy a lovely evening.

Guests were treated to a wine and buffet reception and were entertained by the Courts Service choir, who provided a diverse range of music and songs, with lots of new and old favourites. The occasion once again proved hugely successful not only for retired members but also for current staff. We look forward to the next event which will take place in the autumn.

Employee Assistance Officer Deirdre Maye and her team of helpers are to be congratulated for organising the event. Thanks to everyone who gave of their time to welcome back so many old friends.



Clockwise from top right: Enjoying the Summer Evening in Smithfield – Eileen O'Neill and Teresa Brophy; Brendan Daniels, Dan Boland, Pat Curtin and Pat Kearns; Anne Mooney, Kathleen O'Connor and Noreen O'Donnell and Sarah Byrne.

Book Reviews



Practice and Procedure in the Superior Courts
Benedict O'Flóinn
Second edition –
Tottel Publishing Ltd.

The first edition of this text, published in 1996, became an essential tool of the trade for practitioners, containing as it did the first commentary on the Superior Courts Rules in modern times. Since 1996, there have, of course, been very many amendments to these rules and the publication of this new edition containing, in Mr O'Flóinn's own words, "the principal legislative references, cases, and practice directions applicable to the rules as they appeared to stand on the 14th September 2007", is to be greatly welcomed.

Somewhat tantalisingly, the author in his preface to the new edition refers to the fact that, in the decade since the last edition, the rules introduced contain "several exciting initiatives", but does not elaborate on these. Mention could have been made, for example, of the establishment of the Commercial Court and its case management regime, the template procedures introduced to facilitate statutory applications and appeals to the High Court, the streamlining of applications under the Arbitration Acts and the provision of a detailed procedural regime for proceedings under the legislation on proceeds of crime and financing of terrorism, to say nothing of the procedures necessitated by the range of instruments at EU level in the area of judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters.

This mild criticism aside, this new edition is to be welcomed and I'm confident that it will prove as valuable as its predecessor.

Noel A. Doherty is a Principal Officer in the Courts Service Directorate of Reform & Development.

The Grass is Singing
Doris Lessing

The Grass is Singing, Doris Lessing's first novel, originally published in 1950, was republished in 2007 by Harper Perennial in a Modern Classics edition. Doris Lessing won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2007 and the availability of her first novel is timely.



Set in colonial times, the author's anger at the attitudes of white farmers towards their black workers is clear.

Set in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), where the author lived for a number of years, it tells the story of Mary, a girl from the town who, overhearing some friends suggesting that she will never marry, seeks a husband and moves to the country to marry Dick Turner, a farmer. Mary enters a life of grinding poverty from which there is no escape, Dick's and, indeed, her own attempts at farming being wholly unsuccessful. The disintegration, over a period of years, of the lives of these two flawed individuals is harshly captured, against the background of the beautiful but difficult terrain of that part of southern Africa. Mary's insensitivity and lack of understanding leads eventually to tragedy. Dick's pride and love of the land prevents him from accepting the reality of his position. Yet despite their flaws, Mary and Dick earn our compassion. Set in colonial times, the author's anger at the attitudes of white farmers towards their black workers is clear.

This story of flawed lives and ultimate revenge is compelling and to be recommended.

Coffee and cakes to help Zambia

Senior Judicial Researcher **Sophia Purcell** was delighted with the support for a very worthy cause in Zambia recently.



Sophia Purcell and Mr Justice Vivian Lavan.

My sister and other physiotherapy students are working in Livingstone General Hospital in Zambia having funded their own flights, accommodation and expenses. They fundraised to buy essential equipment for the hospital, for example a theatre table, pulse oximeters, blood pressure machines, incubators, ECG machines, suction machines, weighing scales, thermometers, glucometers, drug supplies, antibiotics, bandages and sutures. The hospital is years behind in terms of equipment compared with the standards we are used to here in Ireland. It received its first ECG machine and first incubator for premature babies last year following much needed fundraising by Irish medical students.

Zambia is approximately the size of California and Nevada combined with a population of 11 million. The hospital has approximately 250 beds, which serve up to 800,000 people. There are only four trained Zambian doctors in the entire hospital, which has little or no medical supplies and the only thing readily available is doses of good intentions. The children's ward has only 40 beds, in some cases with three children per bed. For a hospital short of vital supplies and medicine, the students wanted to raise as much money as possible. Every bit helps, for example, many patients have to go without necessary xrays, the cost of which is only €2. An ET tube is €1.

We were very happy with the turnout for our coffee morning for this very good cause. Thanks to everyone for their very generous donations.



The Legal Quarter lives it up as Light House Cinema adds new cultural dimension.

Dublin's much loved and missed Light House Cinema reopened its doors to members of the filmmaking community and fervent cinema-goers at the beginning of May and has added a great new cultural space in the heart of Smithfield square in the capital's Legal Quarter as **Gerry Curran** reports.

Over 600 well-wishers, members of the area's legal community, makers of movies and loyal cinema goers welcomed the return of the much-loved, iconic cinema at its official launch. The €8 million

project was partly funded and supported by the State through the Department of Tourism and Sport, the Arts Council and the Irish Film Board.

Speaking at the launch, Olive Braiden, Chair of the Arts Council and a member of the Courts Service Board said, "Sometimes the impact of Arts Council support on a project is subtle, yet powerful in its effects. And sometimes, on some special occasions, it allows us a night like tonight, when we get to truly feel proud and excited; when we get to feel like life is full of possibility.



The cinema was designed by award winning practice DTA Architects and features stunning, imaginative architecture, making the Light House the most unique of cinema spaces.



James Morris, Chair of Irish Film Board and Olive Braiden Chair of Arts Council.

Together with the Irish Film Board, our partner in the Cultural Cinema Consortium, I would like to congratulate all those involved in the opening of the Light House and hope it is a beacon for Dublin's cinema-goers for many years to come."

"Developing new audiences and new outlets for Irish films is of key importance to the Irish Film Board and we are delighted to be working

with the Arts Council and the Light House Cinema to achieve this," said James Morris, Chair Bord Scannán na hÉireann/the Irish Film Board.

The cinema was designed by award winning practice DTA Architects and features stunning, imaginative architecture, making the Light House the most unique of cinema spaces. Already, it is poised to become a cultural hub for the Legal Quarter.

During the evening, the co-directors of Light House Cinema, Neil Connolly and Maretta Dillon, spoke to Courts Service News. Neil told us, "We have a serious cultural agenda, which garnered the support from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism, the Arts Council and the Irish Film Board. We believe in the power of cinema to make a difference to people's lives – a belief that cinema can act as a vehicle for exploring the world of the imagination and of dreams: but also the real world, the social and political world in which we have the capacity to be a civilised and civilising influence."

Maretta stressed that, "the mandate of the cinema is still the same as when the venue was in Abbey Street. The Light House team remain committed to providing a wide range of cultural cinema including arthouse, independent, and quality mainstream releases along with films which will reflect our vibrant and ever-evolving multi cultural society."

Bookings and further information are available at www.lighthousecinema.ie.

We believe in the power of cinema to make a difference to people's lives – a belief that cinema can act as a vehicle for exploring the world of the imagination and of dreams.

Walking & Talking around Dublin



Participants of Jewish walking tour attending panel discussion at Tailors Hall.



Almost 250 local residents, tourists, and history buffs along with members of Dublin's Jewish community took part in a walking tour around part of Dublin recently organised by Dublin City Council as part of 'European Neighbours Day'.

The walk was also part of the City Council's effort to facilitate 'European Year for Intercultural Dialogue' which it calls, 'Lets Walk and Talk – New Shores, Ancient Footprints.' The purpose is to educate Irish people and new communities about other cultures in the city. They intend to organise other cultural walking tours and discussion evenings in the near future.

Historian and author Pat Liddy led the tour which was launched by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin Councillor Anne Carter at the Barge Pub in Portobello. The walk included a stop at the Jewish Museum on Walworth Street and went through the South Circular Road and Clanbrassil Street, an area of the city once known as 'Little Jerusalem'.

"Due to the large numbers and the poor weather I didn't plan to stick around for long but I stayed and found it thoroughly interesting and

educational. I'm already looking forward to the next walking tour event," said Karol Cronin, a school teacher who attended the tour.

The tour ended with a Jewish themed reception at Tailors Hall off High Street in Dublin's Medieval Quarter. The reception provided an opportunity for participants to sample Jewish food and culture and included a screening of the short film, 'Blind Eye,' starring Ardal O'Hanlon, which tells the true story of a Jewish woman living in Dublin in 1939 facing deportation to her native Germany. The evening concluded with a lively and informative panel discussion about how the Jewish Community has contributed to life in Dublin. Deputy Alan Shatter; Mary Rose Doorly, producer of 'Blind Eye'; Raphael Siev, curator of the Jewish Museum and respected Jewish expert Joe Briscoe were on the panel which was chaired by Katrina Goldstone.

Commenting on the event, Lord Mayor of Dublin, Councillor Paddy Bourke said, "The Jewish community has been present in Ireland for many years and has played a very substantial part in the commercial, cultural and political life of our communities. As a Dubliner I recognise and acknowledge the important role the Jewish community has played in enriching our city."

The numbers of the Jewish community in Ireland peaked in the early 1900s at around 4,800. That number has dwindled to 1,930 according to the 2006 census. Prominent members of the Jewish community in Ireland include: Robert Briscoe, twice Lord Mayor of Dublin; Ben Briscoe (son of Robert), former Lord Mayor of Dublin and TD; Gerald Goldberg, former Lord Mayor of Cork; and Chaim Herzog, Irish born sixth president of Israel.

Further initiatives and walk and talk dates may be sourced at www.dublin.ie

Getting out & about this SUMMER!

Summer – or at least its distant Irish cousin – is here at last and with it comes a host of festivals and events. Here, we provide a random selection of the events for July and August.

Given the horror of last summer, we are left with two options: prepare an Ark or employ the inherent Irish good humour by having a good time in spite of the weather.

COMEDY

If things do become wet and dreary, there's some good comedy around for respite. **Des Bishop** has become very well known for this TV work, most recently covering his quite successful attempt to learn Irish. In this *Tongues* stand-up show he recounts his Gaeltacht experience; the Pavilion in Dún Laoghaire, 3rd July. No doubt the Modh Connolach will get a lashing.

Dara Ó Briain, who has done well on the UK television scene (*Mock the Week* and *Have I Got News for You*), plays Vicar St on 5th and 6th July. The frenetic and sweaty

Lee Evans plays six nights at the Olympia, beginning 14th July. A UK comedy star of the nineties, his stock has fallen in recent years despite appearing in a number of Hollywood movies. But if you like frantic and surreal comedy this is your man.

FILM

There seems to be a dearth of genuinely good films opening this summer. For those who take their films seriously, **The Galway Film Fleadh** begins on 8th July. It is a six day international film event. Very much a filmmakers' festival, the Fleadh's diverse audience is made up of the general cinema going public, film buffs, student filmmakers, industry professionals and invited guests. Former Guests include: Jeremy Irons, Kathy Bates, Stephen Frears, Michael

Winterbottom, Woody Harrelson, Sir Richard Attenborough, Oliver Reed, Jim Sheridan and Neil Jordan. See www.galwayfilmfleadh.com.

In **Wall.E** Disney continues its recent preference of machines over humans in a CGI movie about the last robot on Earth falling for one from a distant planet. When Bambi's aul one got the chop at least there was an emotional punch. If one of the machines dies in this it will be rather like the demise of a toaster. Opens 18th July.

The never-ending cycle of superhero movies continues apace. This refreshed **Batman** franchise is among the best. Christopher Bale reprises his role as Bruce Wayne/Batman while the late Heath Ledger plays an unhinged Joker in *Dark Knight*, opening 25th July. In **Hellboy 2: The Golden Army** the never-ending cycle of superhero movies... you get the impression. About a boy, from Hell – opens 25th August.

MUSIC

It's a mixed bag for music gigs this summer, with most of the smaller gigs overshadowed by the Oxegen and Electric Picnic festivals.

Oxegen runs for three days this year, the first of which takes place on 11th July. The line-up is more than impressive. R.E.M., The Verve, Amy Winehouse, The Pogues, Bell X1, Cat Power and Reverend and the



Makers are just some of the acts playing over the three days.

Electric Picnic boasts an alternative experience, aimed at a slightly older crowd. Acts that play this festival often play Oxegen the following year. For anyone thinking of bringing their children along (how very Glastonbury) there is free entry for under-12s once accompanied by a valid ticket holder. The Sex Pistols, Sinead O'Connor, Duffy, Christy Moore, Lisa Hannigan, Franz Ferdinand and Sigur Ros are some of the better known names 2008's line-up. From 29th August.

Those two big hitters aside, there's plenty more on offer. **Richard Hawley**, a former Pulp guitarist, recently released a second album of 50s tinged songs to universal acclaim. Probably one of summer's hidden gems, he plays Letterkenny and Leisureland in Galway as part of their respective arts festivals on 13th July and 14th July.

More greying than **Blondie** at this stage, Debbie Harry and Co continue their live shows, playing Vicar St on 25th July. **Michael Bublé** – who is adored by Mammys and incessantly played in Tesco and Homebase – is all set for some schmaltzy swing with gigs on 26th and 27th July at Donnybrook Stadium.

World Fleadh hosts Ireland's top céilí bands, a scheduled session

trail, world title competitions in Irish traditional music, song and dance; and master classes; and demonstrations in various performance styles. It takes place in Portlaoise on 31st July.

They started out as Radiohead wannabes, took a detour through punk and eventually ended up as stadium-fillers. **Muse** put on a great show – they kick off a series of gigs by different artists at Marlay Park on 13th August. **Lenny Kravitz** and **Alanis Morissette** also play Marlay Park, this time on 19th August. "Ten thousand spoons and all you need is a knife." That's not irony Alanis, that's a poorly stocked cutlery drawer.

Expect raucous guitar riffs in Rathfarnham as **Metallica** play Marlay the day after (20th August). The next day (21st August), with eardrums still ringing and staff only having cleaned up the place, **The Killers** and **Bloc Party** arrive to mark one of the more anticipated one-off gigs of summer 2008.

AND FINALLY...

The Festival of World Cultures, at Dun Laoghaire on 22nd August, to enhance artistic expression and integration for Ireland's newer communities by providing a platform for intercultural creative exchange. See www.festivalofworldcultures.com for more.

Selection of Summer Schools 2008

The **James Joyce Summer School** sees lovers of Joyce gather from all corners of the globe to celebrate and analyse the work of this great writer. The Summer School meets in Newman House where Joyce attended university and in Boston College-Ireland, both on St Stephen's Green in the heart of Dublin. The 2008 Summer School will run from Sunday 6 July to Saturday 12 July 2008. Telephone: (01) 7168159 or email anne.fogarty@ucd.ie.

The **2008 Yeats Summer School** is offering lectures to be delivered by leading Yeats scholars from universities all over the world. The programme includes two lectures each morning, seminars daily in small groups, Poetry Readings, Plays, Outings and visits to places of Yeatsian interest. From Saturday July 26 to Friday August 8. Phone 071 9142693 or email info@yeats-sligo.com.

The **2008 International Criminal Court summer school**, offered by the Irish Centre for Human Rights, will be held from 21st-26th June. Over five days of lectures, students are provided with a details of the establishment of the Court, its applicable law, its structures and its operations, while lectures speak to related issues in international criminal law, including universal jurisdiction and immunities. See http://www.nuigalway.ie/human_rights/icc_summer_school.html for further details.

Details of the popular **MacGill summer school** were yet to be announced at the time of going to print.



Whizzing around New York

Our intrepid traveller, **Paddy Monahan**, has been across the Atlantic to the Big Apple. He chose an ingenious way to get around as he explains.

I was first in New York a few years ago and had a whale of a time. I discovered that the Empire State Building is indeed tall, the Statue of Liberty is as impressive a dame as I'd been led to believe and, when the sign says "Don't walk," brother, you'd better not walk. The only thing that struck me as odd was that the taxis were not yellow like in all those movies but a kind of lime green with purple polka dots. (Ok, that last part is not true but I had to check whether you were paying attention.)

Many people travel all the way to New York, yet never see beyond the glitz of Manhattan, which is, after all, only one of the city's five boroughs. And I am just such a person. Sorry, didn't mean to raise your hopes there but what did you expect – an intrepid exploration of the outer reaches of Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx and Staten Island? Who do you think I am Ernest Bleedin' Shackleton?

Anyway, between nightlife, restaurants, Broadway shows, museums, art galleries and NBA basketball in Madison Square Garden, all of which was squeezed into my week-long trip, one begins to realise that New York City is not the sleepy little backwater it is made out to be and there is far too much going on there to begin to relate here. I will, instead, focus on the highlight and greatest surprise of the entire trip: renting a bicycle in Manhattan.

Most people's idea of New York is a heaving mass of metal snarling

bumper to bumper on a grid of sweating blacktop. And that's pretty accurate. But few, including myself before visiting, realise that the entire island is surrounded by a virtually unbroken, off-road cycle track.

I can hardly express the sheer unadulterated joy of whizzing around this intoxicating city on two wheels while safely removed from the vehicular madness within. There are plenty of bike rental joints to choose from and in one spectacular day, with packed lunches and plenty of water, we covered around 60 kilometres.

We began by taking in Battery Park and its views of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island before pedalling on to South Street Seaport, over the Brooklyn Bridge (on a lovely wooden walkway, elevated above the traffic), back over the Manhattan Bridge and then back over the Williamsburg Bridge (all on separate cycle paths). We stopped for a breather and a bit of chow (strictly kosher!) in the astonishingly uniform Hasidic Jewish area of Williamsburg. Then we were back in the saddle again and back into Manhattan.

We cycled inland for a while and parked the bikes to take a guided tour of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum. This fascinating little gem, tucked away amid row after row of classic, four-storey New York houses (with typical rickety exterior fire escapes and crumbling brickwork), perfectly compliments



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the Ellis Island museum and is equally unmissable for anyone with an interest in immigration and the ethnic groups that built old New York, not least, of course, the Irish. Interestingly, the museum is sandwiched between Little Italy, which is now largely only Italian in name and the bustling, heaving and almost entirely Chinese Chinatown, which shows that as the older immigrant communities blend in and spread out, new ones are constantly forming to replace them.

After a truly fascinating couple of hours we were back on the track heading up past the UN buildings and inland for a while (keep an eye on the road for this bit) to take in the Empire State Building, Time Square, and up Broadway into Central Park. North of the park the Morningside Heights area around Columbia University was a real highlight.

And so, with aching limbs and racing hearts and the sun setting in the west, we pounded our way back down the island towards a well-earned rest. That is to say, whoever was not first in the shower got a few minutes rest before heading back out for another night among the wild, wacky and downright weird inhabitants of the city that never sleeps... but that's another story.

Out of the Office with... Rob Rogers

What is your passion?

I'm an Eircom League of Ireland Referee.

How did you get involved?

I was 17, in fifth year and studying hard for my Leaving Cert. I sat a week long course in Trinity College with an exam at the end and on conclusion discovered that I was a fully qualified referee eligible to officiate the following weekend. I was assigned to the South Dublin Football League and my career took off from there.

How did things develop for you?

I was spotted by an FAI Referee's Assessor and offered a place on the FAI School of Excellence for young referees. The school runs over 4 years and is an intensive course in refereeing at the top level. After a stint in the Leinster Senior League (an intermediate league just one level below the Eircom League of Ireland) I was promoted to the Eircom League of Ireland panel in 2005 and became the youngest member of the Panel at the age of 22. I'm now a First Division Referee taking charge of games on a weekly basis.

What challenges are referees of today faced with?

Abuse of match officials is a long running problem. My own experiences with abuse have been both funny and frightening. While refereeing Shelbourne in Tolka Park on the night of the Celine Dion concert in Croke Park recently, the music could be heard in the stadium. A Shelbourne player went down in the box and there was an appeal for a penalty which I didn't grant. The Shelbourne manager then screamed at me "for f*** sake Rob, stop listening to Celine Dion and pay attention."

My worst experience was at a match between 2 teams in Ballyfermot. A fight broke out and I intervened showing Red

Cards to both sides. Unfortunately one of the players assaulted me.

What about opportunities?

I've seen football at the highest level. I was part of an Irish delegation sent to the Champions League game between PSV Eindhoven and Deportivo La Coruna. The greatest thrill was meeting the match officials who included Pierluigi Collina, the most recognisable referee in the history of world football having refereed the 2006 World Cup Final and the 1999 Champions League Final. We spent 2 hours with him before the match and learnt, to our surprise, that he is not as scary in real life as he appears on television. One of my fondest memories is making my television debut at the end of last season, in the Longford Town v Drogheda United match live on RTE 2. On seeing myself on TV, I really hoped that the camera adds 10 pounds!

Where to from here?

I'm the youngest referee on the panel at 24 and would hope to have a long and fruitful career. I'd encourage any football fans to get out to a League of Ireland match and experience for themselves the dramatic changes that have occurred over the last 4 years. Crowds have increased, facilities have improved and are still improving and for the first time in memory the standard of football is on a par with Championship Football in England.

Rob Rogers works in the Courts Service ICT Directorate.

If you'd like to try your hand at refereeing, whether you're male or female, contact Rob at (01) 888 6396 or the FAI Referees Department on (01) 703 7500.



Rob Rogers

Football season kicks off

The Courts Service Football Club has entered the Solicitors League for the 3rd year in a row. Having narrowly missed out on a quarter-final place last year, the team is determined to go further this season. They got off to a great start in the league and are unbeaten in their first 4 games. If you are new to the Service and would like to get involved with the team contact Andy Cleary at (01) 888 6208 or Shane Lynch at (01) 888 6742.

Solicitors' Soccer League Fixtures for Summer 2008

Day	Date	Time	Teams
Tuesday	8th July	6.45pm	Courts v BCM
Tuesday	22nd July	6.45pm	Courts v Small Fry
Tuesday	29th July	8.00pm	O'DSE v Courts
Monday	11th August	6.45pm	William Fry v Courts

Games will be played in the Law Society Sports Grounds in Blackhall Place. Come along and support the lads.





Spoofing the superhero

Our movie critic, Ronan Power, had his doubts about Superhero Movie but was won over by some funny scenes and good acting.

This is the kind of comedy movie that comes along every year and you either love it or hate it, find it side splittingly funny or just mildly amusing. Movies like 'Top Secret' and 'Airplane!' back in the 80's, the Scary Movies series and Meet the Spartans fall into this description.

The story this time focuses on the plot from Spider-man with other superhero movies tied in just right. Rick Ricker (Drake Bell) gets bitten by a dragonfly and has the powers of super strength, wall climbing and flight. He lives with his Aunt Lucille (Marion Ross) and his Uncle Albert (Leslie Nielsen, who's hard not to laugh at) and with the help of his friend Kevin Hart, vows to save the world and win the girl of his dreams Jill (Sarah Paxton). With the help of Producer David Zucker there are laughs and special effects to keep you smiling through its very short running time of about an hour and twenty five minutes.

The movie trailer suggests that this movie is just following the same path as the previous incarnations, but what made me go out to watch it is that it's produced by David Zucker, the person behind classics such as 'Airplane!' and 'The Naked Gun'.

Leslie Nielsen (from 'Airplane!' and 'Naked Gun' stardom)

is in a role not unlike the films that made him a star. The obligatory cameos by Pamela Anderson and Tracy Morgan are nothing to get excited about. They make brief, insignificant appearances that aren't what the movie's about.

This film is about spoofing SUPERHERO movies, if you already didn't know! And they do a fine job. Scene after scene (mostly spoofing the Spiderman trilogy) kept me laughing and laughing until I was actually in pain. Some jokes, mostly the ones involving flatulence fell flat and seemed unsophisticatedly forced. But the rest actually felt fresh and new. I couldn't help but love scenes that provided comedic "What if?" scenarios of scenes from Spiderman and X-Men. The best of which have Drake Bell undergo the sickening transformation into 'The Dragonfly', and even a twist of the famous wall climbing scene from Spiderman where he realizes something just isn't right. This film stays within a decent realm of pertinence, rather than choose random people in pop culture and play off them like caricatures. With Leslie Nielsen at Bell's side we get an authenticity not usually found in spoofs anymore. We do get a Tom Cruise parody that at first feels out of

Would I compare this movie to the likes of 'Top Secret!' or 'Airplane!'? Not even close, but a decent comedy non the less. In an era that's increasingly losing its grip on what is considered humour, it's the closest the audience is going to get to laughing.

place, but eventually grows on you.

Make sure you stay out for the credits, there's about 20 minutes of cut scenes in the credits to pad the movie out. I loved the Dragonfly character. I know it's a spoof but it felt like a real superhero. I would actually like to see a comic of him. Would I compare this movie to the likes of 'Top Secret!' or 'Airplane!'? Not even close, but a decent comedy non the less. In an era that's increasingly losing its grip on what is considered humour, it's the closest the audience is going to get to

laughing.



Quiz Time



With the European Championships now in full flow, it's hard to believe that it's 20 years since Ireland first competed in this tournament. To mark the 20th anniversary of Euro 88, I'm going to try to jog your memory with some questions surrounding that memorable event:

1. Name the Scottish player who scored the winning goal against Bulgaria to ensure Ireland's qualification for the tournament.

Answer:

2. On the night before the above game, having given up hope of qualification, Ireland played a "Farewell to the European Championships" match in Dalymount Park. Who were the opponents and what was the score?

Answer:

3. In which German city was the game against England played?

Answer:

4. Who scored the only goal in that game?

Answer:

5. Name the Irish player who was sent off in Ireland's last group qualify game against Bulgaria and missed out on the finals?

Answer:

6. What was the result of Ireland's second group game against Russia?

Answer:

7. Who scored the goal for Holland that knocked Ireland out of the competition?

Answer:

8. Name the country that won the tournament.

Answer:

Send your answers to: Tony Lawlor, Courts Service Information Office, Phoenix House, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7, or by e-mail to alawlor@courts.ie



Eamonn Mooney, winner of the December quiz, accepting his prize from Eva Avery, Information Office.

The answers to the March quiz were:

1. In which city is Eyre Square? **Galway**
2. In which county is Monasterboice round tower? **Louth**
3. Which is known as the Marble City? **Kilkenny**
4. Which Irish actor has appeared in Fawlty Towers, Robin's Nest and Waking Ned Devine? **David Kelly**
5. His father was Brazilian, his middle name was Parris, he was born in Birmingham yet he became the one of the most famous Irish rock stars of all time - who was he? **Phil Lynott**
6. Ireland's 15 principal railway stations are named after whom?
The leaders of the 1916 Rising
7. Which is the only town in Ireland with a Z in its name? **Poyntzpass**
8. Which band had a hit with Summer In Dublin? **Bagatelle**
9. On which date is the feast of St. Brigid? **1st February**
10. In which town was Count John McCormack born? **Athlone**

And the winner is: MAEVE FOLEY, Áras Uí Dhálaigh.

Congratulations Maeve. We'll be in touch to present your prize.

Through the lens



Visit to the Four Courts by Ambassadors' spouses



Cillian Smith, Estates & Buildings Business Unit and daughter Isla



Members of the Judiciary with English and Spanish trainee barristers on recent visit to the Four Courts



Annika Stephan and Lisa Maybury of Corporate Services, with Chloe McAdams at the Summer Evening in Smithfield



Swedish Market Court on recent visit to the Four Courts



Cork goalkeeper Donal O'Gusack and Tony Lawlor, Information Office