

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Contents

Message from the Chairman of the Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Introduction by the Director of the National Museum of Ireland

Collections

Art and Industry

Irish Antiquities

Irish Folklife

Natural History

Conservation

Registration

Services

Education and Outreach

Marketing

Photographic

Design

Facilities (Accommodation and Security)

Administration

General

Financial Management

Human Resource Management

Information Communications Technology (ICT)

Financial Statements 1st January 2010- 31st December 2010

Publications by NMI Staff

Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Staff Directory

Message from the Chairman of the Board of the National Museum of Ireland

This was the final year of tenure of the Board of the National NMI of Ireland which was appointed in May 2005 and which terminated in May 2010.

The Board met three times in 2010 prior to the termination of its term of office in May 2005. It met on 4th February 2010, 4th March 2010, and 21st April 2010.

The Audit Committee of the Board met on three occasions in 2010 - being 14th January, 31st March, and 21st April. The Committee reviewed and approved the Financial Statements, and the Board duly approved, and signed off on, the same on 21st April 2010. The Audit Committee conducted interviews for the appointment for a new three-year period for the internal audit function. Deloitte was the successful applicant, and the Board approved of the awarding of the contract at its meeting of 21st April 2010. The internal auditors produced a draft audit plan for the period 1st July 2010 to 30th June 2013, and presented it to the NMI for consideration in July. The internal auditors commenced a review of General ICT Controls across the NMI in autumn 2010, and a draft report was presented to NMI management in November 2010.

The General Purposes Advisory Committee and the Development and Strategy Committee of the Board also duly continued their excellent work up to the termination of the Board's tenure, reporting to the Board at the Board meetings aforesaid. Likewise, the National Cultural Institutions Act Committee brought its excellent work on the unimplemented parts of the 1997 Act to completion, and made recommendations to the Board which were duly approved by the Board.

All Committees of the outgoing Board prepared executive summaries, which will be of benefit to the incoming Board of the NMI.

The Board approved the NMI Data Protection Plan at its meeting of 4th February 2010, and approved the NMI Documentation Plan at its meeting of 21st April 2010.

The Collections Resource Centre at Swords was fitted out in 2010. By year-end, plans were at an advanced stage in relation to the transfer of material to it which will commence in 2011. A manager for the facility was appointed in 2010, and the NMI made a staffing submission for the new Resource Centre to the Department of Finance through the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

There was a very successful re-opening of the Natural History Museum performed by Minister Mary Hannifin on 28th April 2010.

The Cross of Cong Exhibition at the NMI of Country Life at Turlough Park, Castlebar was officially opened on 30th March 2010. The exhibition was extremely well received and proved to be enormously successful for the remainder of 2010, and it was planned to continue the exhibition into early 2011.

The very successful exhibition of High Crosses opened in the Riding School at Collins Barracks in June 2010, and this exhibition proved to be a great visitor-drawer.

The *Asgard* conservation project was completed in June 2010, and its exhibition is planned for 2011.

The Faddan More Psalter conservation work was completed in 2010, and it will go on display in a major exhibition which is planned for mid-2011.

Overall, 2010 was a very successful year for the NMI. Notwithstanding budgetary challenges, tremendous work continued to be done by all involved in Ireland's premier cultural institution.

I wish to especially thank Dr. Patrick F. Wallace, Director, and his excellent staff at all levels throughout the four museum sites at the NMI.

I also wish to say a word of sincere thanks to the Office of Public Works for the splendid work that it continues to do for and on behalf of the NMI.

I also wish to thank the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport for the great support given by it and its staff to the Board of the NMI throughout 2010.

Finally, I wish to pay a special word of thanks to the secretary to the Board, namely Aoife McBride, who, as ever, has done outstanding work for the Board and for the NMI.

I cannot let this occasion pass without paying a very well-deserved tribute and word of thanks to the outgoing Board, which served the NMI so diligently and so well over the five-year period from May 2005 to May 2010.

Beir bua agus beannacht

Dr. John O'Mahony S.C.
Chairman
Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Introduction by the Director of the National Museum of Ireland

2010 was an interesting year from the governance perspective as the National Museum of Ireland functioned without a Board from April to December. The big event of the year was the reopening of the Natural History Museum in April. The eagerly anticipated event was well supported by the media, particularly *RTE*. Visitor numbers surpassed all expectations with nearly 200,000 visitors going through in the first five months. Visitor numbers to Turlough Park House, Castlebar have been equally encouraging thanks to the temporary return to Connaught of the Cross of Cong and again thanks to the strong support of *RTE*. Visitor numbers to Collins Barracks slid somewhat after the success of the “Dead Zoo” but recovered with the High Cross exhibition later in the year. All in all between our four sites we were only seven thousand visitors short of one million.

2010 saw the completion of conservation on the Faddan More Psalter by John Gillis who was seconded from the manuscript library at Trinity College Dublin and who was supported by the laboratory staff of the NMI under the direction of Anthony Read, Keeper of Conservation. Again *RTE* did us proud by having Alan Gilsean produce a programme which did justice to this project. This was screened in September. 2010 also saw conclusion of the conservation of Erskine Childers’ *Asgard* by John Kearon and his colleagues. Both Psalter and *Asgard* will go on show in 2011.

The John McCormack exhibition was replaced by an exhibition to commemorate the centenary of the Irish Countrywomen’s Association at Collins Barracks. A good start was made in the Furniture Gallery where we are focusing on vignettes of furniture and fittings of different periods and styles.

The year saw the retirement of our long serving colleague Dr James P. (Jim) O’Connor, a renowned entomologist, who spent his working life at the Natural History Museum, where he completely reorganised the insect collection. He was also a founder of the *Irish Biographical Association* and editor of their *Journal* and *monographs*. Dr O’Connor served as Keeper of the Natural History Division and with Paddy Ashe produced a popular survey of Irish insects. Happily for the institution, his association with the NMI will continue into his retirement.

The passing of Professor Barry Raftery, the internationally known expert on the Irish Iron Age will be sorely felt at the NMI. He had known the institution since childhood when his father worked here both as Keeper of Irish Antiquities and finally, as Director of the NMI. A believer in acquainting students with artefacts and their typologies, Professor Raftery was a great supporter of the NMI including of its Medieval Dublin Excavations Publications Board which he chaired up to the time of his last illness. Among the other friends of the institution who were lost during the year were Dáire O’Rourke, one time city archaeologist and Mary Boydell who devoted so much time to the study of Irish glass and who presented her own collection to the NMI.

The most significant publication produced by the NMI in 2010 was Martin Comey's *Coopers and Coopering in Viking Age Dublin*, the latest in the series of reports in the NMI's Dublin Excavations (1962-81).

Art and Industry

The Art and Industrial Division is responsible for over a quarter of a million artefacts reflecting Irish economic, social, industrial, political and military history over the last four centuries. In addition the staff care for collections of Irish, European and Asian decorative arts, which give an understanding of oriental design and culture as they relate to Ireland.

There were a number of highly significant acquisitions, two exhibitions were opened, existing exhibitions were revamped and a considerable amount of assistance was provided for second level and third level students.

The twentieth century furniture gallery opened in March and a small exhibition on the recently acquired Maguire chalices opened in August. The exhibition to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the Irish Countrywomen's Association commenced in October. Work started on a number of other exhibitions, including the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century furniture galleries, the Ib Jorgensen fashion exhibition and the Dickie Bird exhibition. The core work of cataloguing and documenting the collections, in cooperation with the Documentation Department, continued.

Significant donations received during the year included: a pendant, silver inlaid with gold, by Pádraig O Mathúna; a collection of clothing and jewellery, 1950s and 1960s, from Limerick; tweed suits designed by Thomas Wolfangel; a collection of garments designed by Ib Jorgensen; a glass sculpture by Mary Bayard White, NCAD, 2010; a collection of uniforms, helmets and militaria of Irish interest (over 40 pieces) donated by American benefactor; two collections of archives and photographs of Irish military interest; an autograph Book, Frongoch, 1917; a Neo Celtic cake-stand; books and archive material relating to Sheerin model staircase (furniture collection); and designs and archive material of Kilkenny Design Workshops.

Significant purchases made during the year included: a pair of rare Irish mahogany side-chairs, c.1720; Irish rosewood escritoire, mid-19th century, by Arthur Jones, Dublin; set of furniture drawings, 19th century, signed by Robert Strahan, Dublin; a gilt mirror, regency period, by R and W. Clarke, Cork; a Clarinet, 19th century, by Dollard, Dublin; a table by contemporary designer John Lee; a wood turners bowl, by designer, Maria van Kesteren; a pair of delftware armorial plates, Dublin, 18th century; a collection of Arklow Studio pottery, 1960S, by John Ffrench; a Cavalry sword, Rathmolyn Cavalry, by Archer of Dublin, 1805; a collection of memorabilia relating to Commissioner J.J. Jones, Dublin Metropolitan Police, 1890s; a sampler in coloured silk, dated 1840, showing map of Ireland with county boundaries delineated; Irish jewellery, 1970-1980, designed by Marika Murnaghan; an Autograph book, Kilmainham Jail, 1923; an Autograph Book, Tintown (Curragh), 1941 and a Fenian Rising jubilee poster. A number of purchases were also made under the NMI/ Crafts Council of Ireland joint purchase scheme including a ceramic sculpture, 2010, by Sonja Landweer; a contemporary glass and ceramics, by Mary Mackey and Nuala O'Donovan; a Candelabrum, silver, by Rudolf Heltzel, Kilkenny, 1973 and a necklace, in silver and gold, by contemporary Kilkenny silversmith, James Kelly.

The Division provided a wide range of talks and lectures at home and abroad. The Division also worked with the Education Department on several projects and provided a large number of talks, gallery tours and lectures, for interest groups, specialist researchers, diplomatic staff and the general public. Seminars and conferences, most noticeably on 1916 (April) and the end of World War One (November) and the annual conference of ICOMAM (international military history museums group) were facilitated and staff members made contributions to several conferences in Ireland and abroad including the International Academy of Ceramics in Paris. Students, particularly from TCD, UCD, NUIM and NCAD, were assisted and advised with their theses and assignments, especially in the areas of decorative arts, music and design history. In addition, members of the Division contributed to a number of open days and handling sessions. Staff participated in events such as *Culture Night*, *Science Week* and *Seachtain na Gaeilge*. They sat on specialist committees and judging panels and provided interviews and information for several television and radio programmes.

Irish Antiquities

The Division is responsible for the archaeological heritage of Ireland. In addition to managing substantial collections of Ethnographical, Classical and Egyptian material, the staff control and manage over two million archaeological objects.

Fieldwork was undertaken in eighteen counties to investigate archaeological discoveries. Liaison took place with the National Monuments Service, Underwater Archaeology Unit, Heritage Council, Railway Procurement Agency, National Roads Authority, Dublin City Council, Bord Na Móna and with a wide range of commercial archaeology companies.

The following applications were processed in the period in question:

Excavation/dive/detect licences: 584

Ministerial Consent 73

Ministerial Directions 6

Export 227

Alter 237

The Treasury was closed and dismantled and a temporary exhibition *Iconic Treasures* opened. An exhibition of *Bog Costumes* was transferred to the balcony and a sheela-na-gig was transferred to the *Medieval Ireland 1150-1550* exhibition. An exhibition of Irish High Cross replicas was put in place the Riding School, Collins Barracks while the Coggalbeg Hoard of Early Bronze Age gold objects was put on display in Kildare Street.

The Cross of Cong was displayed in the National Museum of Ireland- Country Life, Turlough Park Preparatory work began on the new *Treasury* (to include an exhibition of the Faddan More Psalter). Audio guides of the new exhibitions, which will open in 2011, were prepared in a number of languages with the aid of a grant from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Acquisitions included finds excavated by commercial archaeological companies and objects reported by members of the public including stone axe heads and lithics from counties Cork, Kerry, Kildare, Leitrim, Mayo and Offaly. Bog finds included bog butter (some in containers), a deer trap and a stitched leather bag. Human remains were also acquired as were four bronze cannon from 16th and 17th century wrecks in Irish waters, as well as a variety of bronze and iron weapons. A collection of prehistoric tools and weapons from the Dunraven (Co. Limerick) and Lowry (Co. Donegal) collections was acquired by purchase as was a bronze early medieval church bell known as the Bell of Drumholm (Co. Donegal) , a bronze penannular brooch, an unprovenanced Romanesque-style crucifix figure and a Frechen Jug. There was consultation with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government relating to the proposed acquisition of a late medieval boat from the river Boyne at Drogheda.

Further work was undertaken to document acquisitions under treatment at the waterlogged wood facility at Cloontuskert, Co. Roscommon. Cleaning and maintenance was undertaken in the reserve collections. An inventory of the plaster cast mould collection stored in Daingean commenced with a view to its eventual transfer to the Collections Resource Centre, Swords. Human remains were transferred to the Anatomical Store in Collins Barracks.

Loans were made to the Museum für Archäologie, Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Herne, Germany; Waterford Museum of Treasures; Cavan County Museum and the Classical Museum, U.C.D. Staff assisted in the salvage of objects from a fire that destroyed the Diocesan Museum and St. Mel's Cathedral, Longford. There were dealings with a number of other museums including the Ulster Museum, Galway City Museum, Limerick City Museum, Athlone Castle Museum, Kells Visitor Centre, Hunt Museum, Strokestown Famine Museum, Drum Heritage Centre, Ferns Castle Visitor Centre and County Museums in Carlow, Clare, Louth, Monaghan, Kerry and South Tipperary.

There was liaison with An Garda Síochána on a number of matters including the theft of Bronze Age gold artefacts from Co. Roscommon - the Coggalbeg hoard.

Ongoing research projects include the Unpublished Burials Project, Viking Graves Project, Irish Bog Bodies Project and the Prehistoric Gold Research Group. Staff published a wide range of archaeological research papers Staff lectured extensively to colleges, archaeological and historical societies, professional seminars and conferences.

There were 207 visits to the archive by external researchers and 69 research visits to study the reserve collections. Staff provided guided tours of the exhibitions to Dr. Ian and Baroness Paisley, the Ambassadors of Belgium and Pakistan, Chinese State Officials and senior officials of Shanghai Museum. Group visits facilitated included students and staff from T.C.D (Dublin), NUIG (Galway), Vienna University (Austria), Morley College (London), Kilfinnane Historical Society (Co. Limerick), Lorrha Historical Society (Co. Tipperary), Carna National School (Co. Galway), and Ballon Residents Group (Co. Carlow). Five further groups were given guided tours of Sheela-na-gigs in the reserve collection.

Staff supervised seventeen Transition Year Students and fourteen Interns from Ireland, USA, Germany and Italy.

Staff were represented on the Knowth Publication Steering Group; Royal Irish Academy Archaeology Committee; South Dublin County Heritage Forum; Discovery Programme Directorate; Bord na Móna Liaison Group; Designated Museums Liaison Group; Excavation Licence Interview Board; International Prehistoric Gold Research Group, and the Thesaurus of Archaeological Terms Group.

Irish Folklife

The Irish Folklife Division manages the national collections of objects representing Irish traditional life in the period principally between the Great Famine and the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The Division is based in the National Museum of Ireland - Country Life at Turlough Park House, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.

2010 was a very busy year for the Division, particularly in the area of exhibitions. The Irish Museums Association travelling exhibition, *Museums Matter*, augmented substantially with objects from the Folklife collections, was displayed in February and March. The Cross of Cong, on loan from the National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology, went on display at the end of March and will continue on display until June 2011; this is the first time that the Cross has left Dublin since it was acquired in the early nineteenth century. *Straw, Hay and Rushes* continued on exhibition throughout 2010. The exhibition focuses on the great ingenuity of people in using everyday materials to make objects for use about the house and farm. In September and October, the RDS Crafts Prize Winners Exhibition was displayed in the NMI. In December, *Through a Swedish Lens – Images of early twentieth century Irish life*, an exhibition of photographs on loan from the National Folklore Archive in University College Dublin, went on display; the exhibition runs through to Spring 2011. A small programme of refurbishment of the Country Furniture exhibition in Collins Barracks was completed in 2010. *Whitewash and Thatch*, an exhibition developed by staff in the Division was displayed at Fermanagh County Museum during the summer.

Some 95 new objects were added to the Folklife collections during the year. Among the more important objects added were additional travel posters – this collection is now almost complete; a fish trap of a kind also used in Stone Age times, and a Bunbeg currach from Co. Donegal.

In terms of collections care, a programme of improvement in the display of objects in the principal exhibition commenced. Continued progress was made at the Division's store in Daingean, where two of the Division's curators are currently based. Significant progress has been made on the inventory of the Collection in both Turlough Park and Daingean. Preparatory work for the transfer of the Collection in Daingean to the NMI's new Collections

Resource Centre in Swords, Co. Dublin, is in progress. A major transfer of in excess of 800 of the smaller items in the Collection to Turlough Park took place during the year.

In other activities, a research project to identify and document the Folklife Ceramics collection was completed in 2010.

In addition, staff gave lectures to extra-mural university courses and to local societies as well as taking part in radio and television broadcasts in Ireland and abroad, while the Manager Keeper participated in an international workshop on Irish and Russian Cultures held on Achill Island.

Natural History

The Natural History Museum reopened to the public in April 2010, following almost three years of closure. The Office of Public Works completed a programme of improvements in terms of visitor safety and access. These include a wheelchair access ramp to ground floor, disabled access toilet, safety netting for glass ceilings, a fire safety upgrade and the restoration of the stone staircase. Works also covered improvements for the collections, with better artificial lighting of the ground floor and screening of daylight to eliminate ultra violet light which fades museum specimens. The ground floor now includes a dedicated education space for hands-on activities and organised events. There is also a first floor reading area with free access to books on natural history. The second and third floor balconies unfortunately remain closed, awaiting implementation of a works programme that would provide fire exits direct from these upper levels.

In the first seven months of operations, the Museum saw a very large number of visitors, over 250,000 people. This is more than twice the annual average seen in the building before closure in 2007. The temporary exhibition at the Riding School in Collins Barracks closed in April, after a very popular run, with over 180,000 visitors in twelve months. These major projects occupied a great deal of the time and effort of staff over this period. Natural History Division staff were greatly assisted by colleagues from other NMI Departments, as well as a large body of volunteers.

Work on collections included a continuation of the cleaning and restoration of taxidermy from exhibition areas. Most mammals have been completed and work is now concentrated on the bird exhibits. As part of the preparations for reopening the Museum, nearly all display cases were emptied, thoroughly cleaned, checked for insect pests and exhibits replaced. A number of minor changes were made to the exhibition layout. The walrus was moved to a more appropriate place between the elephants, great ape skeletons were moved to a new case beside the other large primates, and a selection of hominid skull replicas was installed with other primates.

Curation of the insect collections continued, completing 70 drawers of the large collection of Irish and British leafhoppers, froghoppers and related groups (Hemiptera). This type of work involves putting new pins into the dried insect specimens as older materials are seldom satisfactory for long term storage. New acquisitions are incorporated and specimens sent to various international experts for identification to species level. The caddis fly collection was also completed.

In addition to their scientific publications, staff contributed to the production and management of the *Bulletin of the Irish Biogeographical Society*, *Irish Journal of Earth Sciences*, *Irish Naturalists Journal*, *Earth Science Ireland*, *The Geological Curator*, *Journal and Newsletter of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland*, *Irish Speleology*, also publications and the website of the Irish Museums Association.

At the end of the year the NMI entomologist Dr James O'Connor MRIA retired, following 40 years of public service, including 35 spent as Assistant Keeper or Keeper in the NMI.

Conservation

The work programme in 2010 was based largely on major projects due to come to fruition in 2011. However input was also made into a number of exhibitions that opened during the course of the year. Work was also carried out for the reopening of the Natural History Museum and on the preparation of the Collections Resource Centre at Swords.

Remedial conservation for 2010 was a mixture of the preparation of objects for exhibition, coupled with the treatment of backlog archaeological material. The most significant event of the year was the reopening of the Natural History Museum, with the need to carry out the cleaning of vast numbers of specimens on display prior to the readmission of the public. The exhibition *The Dead Zoo at Large – Treasures of the Natural History Museum* closed, and conservation staff were heavily involved in the installation of ‘The Irish High Cross’ exhibition with the need to work with the OPW on the assembly of the casts of the crosses and subsequently to gap-fill and in-paint them. The programme of conservation of the objects found on the Dublin Excavations was extended to include a specialist to work on the conservation of the textiles. Conservation staff also participated in the project to recover the artefacts from the Longford Cathedral Museum following the disastrous fire of Christmas 2009.

The most significant projects for the year were the continuing conservation of the Faddan More Psalter and the *Asgard*. The conservation of the Faddan More Psalter was largely completed, with extensive further work carried out on the relocation of the more substantial ‘floating fragments’ – pieces which had moved from their original positions during the manuscript’s time in the bog, but the locations of which could still be identified based on the text written on them. Work on the *Asgard* continued with the rebuilding of the boat’s interior to the original specifications and the re-laying of the original decks.

The programme to systematically upgrade specimens from the displays of the Natural History Museum carried on. Substantial progress continued to be made in clearing the 60 year backlog of waterlogged wood conservation at Lanesborough, Co Roscommon; the project being extended to include the structural timbers from the Dublin Excavations.

2010 saw the opening of Phase I of the new Period Furniture gallery, which involved major conservation of pieces from the 20th Century furniture collections. When Phase I had opened work then began, preparing the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century furniture selected for Phase II of the gallery.

The single most major preventive conservation project for the NMI in 2010 was the acquisition of the new Collections Resource Centre in Swords. Major input was made into the setting up of the centre, including the environmental specifications, storage cage layouts, object processing and quarantine areas, laboratory area layouts, specifications for storage furniture etc. It is hoped that this extensive work will help to ensure that the new facility reaches its full potential when objects are transferred into it in 2011.

Another major development during the year involved work that was carried out to the lighting in the Natural History Museum. Substantial changes were made to the artificial lighting system for the displays, prior to the Museum reopening. In addition light reducing film was fitted to all windows, and to the huge roof-light used to illuminate the upper galleries. The combination of the new lighting system and the reduction of light entering through the windows and roof had the effect of controlling the excessive light in the building for the first time since its opening, without affecting the ambience of the exhibitions.

Projects to upgrade the state of entire collections in the NMI carried on, with work particularly concentrating on aspects of the ceramics and glass collections from the various curatorial divisions of the NMI.

The programme of freezing objects from around the NMI to treat suspected insect infestation continued, as did continuous environmental monitoring which took place on all NMI sites where collections are housed.

The regular programme of public tours of the Department continued.

Registration

The Registration Department is responsible for the documentation, transfer and location management of the NMI's collections. It controls and maintains the NMI's Collection management database and also manages the NMI's archives and central library and administers NMI loans.

Following the leasing and fit-out of the new Collections Resource Centre at Swords, Co. Dublin, the Department assumed responsibility for its overall management. A manager was appointed in August and at year's end plans were in development for the transfer of material. The priorities agreed were the Folklife collection, currently in the former St. Conleth's Reformatory, Daingean, Co Offaly, the Natural History collection, currently in Beggar's Bush, Dublin 4 and the finds from archaeological excavations.

Elements of the NMI's Documentation Plan which is compliant with SPECTRUM, the UK Museum Documentation Standard, and which includes a five-year Inventory Project, were implemented throughout the year. The Inventory Project, referred to in last year's report, continued in the four curatorial divisions. A total of 88,472 records were validated this year. The total number of validated records since the Project began is 223,000 and the number of records by Division is as follows: Art and Industrial Division 31,300; Irish Antiquities Division 112,000; Irish Folklife Division 18,000 and Natural History Division 61,700. Transfer of Title and Entry-Exit forms, also part of the SPECTRUM standard, were introduced. Two audits of the project were carried during the year recording an average of 97.5% accuracy over the four sites.

At the beginning of the year the loans to the military history exhibition were restructured: a total of 23 loans were updated to comply with NMI loan numbering procedures. In addition a further nine loans were renewed, three loans were converted to donations to the NMI, two of which related to the military history collection and one was incorporated into the textile collection. One loan was returned to the NMI while twelve loans to the NMI were returned to their respective owners. 15 new loans were administered including loans to the NMI of Sgt Patrick Mahony's Victoria Cross and a Timoney Armoured car from the Irish Defence Forces. A collection of Classical Greek artefacts was lent to University College Dublin's School of Classics and a collection of postal artefacts to An Post at the GPO. Over the course of 2010 a total 65 loans were administered.

6027 titles were added to Adlib library management system this year and there are now over 34,100 titles on the system. 400 queries from both internal and external users were addressed. The inter-library loan service was widely utilised and over 185 titles were borrowed from university libraries in England and Ireland. A draft internal strategic report was prepared outlining the proposed development of the library over the next four years. The report included a programme to address the remaining backlog of cataloguing and ongoing service provision. At year's end this report was being considered.

A series of pilot projects were initiated in the archive. A box-listing programme of the files of the Art and Industrial Division was undertaken allowing for an improvement in access to the

collection. The accessioning of this collection on to Adlib Archives continued throughout 2010. Arranging and listing the Mary Boydell Collection of research papers and photographs on the history of Irish glass commenced. In preparation for the introduction of an integrated records management system, the records of the Registration Department, Human Resources and Finance Units were selected as a pilot project. A collection of NMI-related documents (1902-1977), generated whilst the NMI was under its remit, and scheduled for destruction in the Department of Education were acquired, cleaned, re-housed and accessioned.

In association with the Education and Outreach Department, the Archivist and Librarian hosted a number of open sessions on their respective collections.

The Librarian and Archivist also sit on the NMI's work group on digitisation.

Education and Outreach

Visitors to the National Museum of Ireland participated in a range of rich and varied activities in 2010. These were designed for children, adults and families and were listed in the NMI's Calendar of Events. They included tours, workshops, conferences, demonstrations and adult gallery talks and catered for audiences' diverse learning needs and styles. Most activities were booked out in advance with very positive visitor feedback received.

Throughout the academic year, primary and post primary schools could choose from a menu of activities and services on offer in the Schools Programme. Linked to curriculum and thematically based on NMI exhibitions, the programme included such activities as tours of the Cross of Cong, making Prehistoric clay pots, writing poetry with established poets, storytelling with well-known storytellers and handling wolf skins. Teacher training courses were also provided.

An ongoing project involving the development of handling boxes for use in schools continued to be developed with St Patrick's College of Education, Education Centres and the Professional Development Service for Teachers. The objects in the boxes complement NMI collections and are based on the Bronze Age and 20th century work and leisure themes.

A priority in 2010 was to develop resources such as teachers' resource packs and activity sheets for schools and families. These proved popular with schools in particular for self guided visits. These were available on NMI's website and at reception areas to enhance audiences' independent engagement with exhibitions.

Along with other departments, policies were developed in Child Protection, Access and Volunteering, with relevant procedures developed for the Child Protection Policy. Of note was the establishment of guidelines for use, management and storage of images of children, undertaken with the NMI's Senior Photographer.

In addition to promoting events and services in the Calendar of Events and the Schools' Programme, the Education Department organised NMI stands at the Young Scientist Exhibition, the History and Arts Teachers Association of Ireland Conferences and the Native Species Weekend at Dublin Zoo.

Archaeology

The Learning Resource Room was open to the public as a drop in venue for the first time. Work began on the redevelopment of this learning space and the redevelopment of the Treasury exhibition.

Purchases were made to augment the handling collection to include a Mesolithic fish trap, a collection of flints and Viking based objects.

A review of guided tours resulted in visitor figures reaching 1000 between July and December with family events attracting up to 1900 visitors in July and August alone.

Country Life

An exhibition organised with the Irish Countrywomen's Association, to mark World Rural Women's Day, attracted large numbers of visitors.

The Community Archive Project expanded to include Turlough Village and surrounding districts.

The Knitting Circle, Music Circles and Textile Crafters continued to grow with the Knitting Circle and Straide National School commencing a collaboration. The Garden Outreach Project was also rolled out to primary schools.

Decorative Arts and History

Events were well attended throughout 2010 with the 'Babies on Board' tours and talks to mark 1916 and Ireland in World War 1 proving popular.

The first phase of the three-year project with Larkin Community College began which saw students explore the 'Soldiers and Chiefs' exhibition through storytelling and photography, culminating in a display of photographs at Collins Barracks taken by students of their local heroes from Dublin's inner city.

Additions to the handling collection included 18th century undergarments, a 19th century backgammon set and 20th century chairs for the new Furniture exhibition. The 'What's in the Museum' primary teachers' pack was developed.

Natural History

The re-opening of the Natural History Museum saw large numbers of families and schools using the Discovery and Reading Areas. The Quake and Shake workshop and handling objects, such as bears and tigers, continued to attract audiences with over 2000 participating in the programme during July and August.

The bio-diversity conference attracted over 100 attendees and stimulated a lot of interest among wildlife groups. Activity sheets and posters based on the theme of biodiversity were developed.

Marketing and PR

Throughout 2010 the National Museum of Ireland gained a considerable amount of PR both regionally and nationally on TV, Radio and Press.

The re-opening of the Natural History site in April 2010 was a huge success – gaining an all time high of over ¼ million visitors by December. Other points of interest were the re-launch of *The Irish High Cross* in The Riding School, Collins Barracks and the launch of the *Cross of Cong* in Turlough Park – each gaining widespread media coverage. In addition, the *Whitewash & Thatch* and *Down Memory Lane* Exhibitions (which were both developed in Turlough Park) travelled to other venues around the country during 2010.

The total visitor figure of 992,953 (just 7,047 short of 1 million) to the four NMI sites, is the 2nd highest for the 9 year period 2002 – 2010. The following is a breakdown of visitor numbers across all sites.

Visitor Numbers	Annual Comparison		
Visitor Numbers	2009	2010	% Change
Kildare Street	365,762	366,201	0.1%
Merrion Street	0	253,597	n-a
Collins Barracks	314,649	258,812	-17.7%
<i>Military History</i>	<i>116,904</i>	<i>99,253</i>	-15.1%
<i>Riding School</i>	<i>138,471</i>	<i>100,809</i>	<i>n-a</i>
Turlough Park	97,280	114,343	+17.5%
Total	777,691	992,953	+27.68%

The Marketing Department engages regularly with key Trade Partners e.g. Tourism Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, Dublin Tourism and other tourism operators throughout the country. The NMI took part in a market research survey of foreign tourists in conjunction with Fáilte Ireland and the other cultural institutions. The findings were both positive in terms of the overall visitor experience the NMI sites and useful in terms of recommendations for further development in attracting foreign tourists.

Building awareness of the NMI is key and advertising plays an important role through Radio and Press (nationally and regionally) as well Outdoor campaigns. A key message on all marketing collateral and media publicity was “**Free Admission**”. Given the current economic climate, this has proved to be very compelling reason for visits to the NMI.

The NMI's cafés and shops continue to provide the visiting public with a quality service which adds to the overall visitor experience. The range and variety of shop products are continuously being assessed and altered – where appropriate to both match with new exhibitions and to meet the needs of the public.

In 2010 the retail outlets reached a turnover figure of €12,000, a 4% increase on 2009 figures. The re-opening of the Natural History shop was the main contributor to this; however the successful *Cross of Cong* exhibition in Turlough Park along with ongoing interest in Kildare Street ensured that 2009 revenue was maintained at these sites. Collins Barracks revenue decreased due to the closing of *The Dead Zoo* exhibition. A successful Christmas advertising campaign increased visitors to the shops by 20%.

The sixth annual Féile na Tuaithe took place at Turlough Park in May and attracted approximately 25,000 people, the most successful event to date. It continues to go from strength to strength, attracting people to the NMI from a three-hour geographical radius. It is now firmly established as a leading free family festival and is a natural extension of the NMI's purpose of bringing families together to enjoy quality time and learn about the traditions of bygone days. The event creates vital broad awareness of the NMI and its exhibitions and facilities, and encourages repeat visits during the rest of the year.

External funding and sponsorship was obtained to assist in the promotion of the event and the programme featured a community arts collaboration with Mayo Co. Council drawing inspiration from the NMI collections.

Photography

The Photographic Department as part of Services Division is responsible for delivering a photographic service to all Divisions and Departments across the NMI and to an external market.

The Department retained the contract for service for the Digital Image Technician and the the Contract Photographers on a multi-operator framework.

Progress continued on the digital asset management project from the design concept to archiving all new photographic images and existing digital files whilst retrieving and outputting images on a daily basis.

Photography was undertaken for the Franciscan Silver Catalogue including photography in Christ Church Cathedral Crypt; front covers for the Unpublished Burials publication; nine Thangkas and other textile pieces for the Albert Bender Catalogue and the satchel and bag from Faddan More were photographed.

Photography commenced on the collections for the new Treasury exhibition and the conservation of the mosaic floor which will open in 2011. New exhibition galleries in the Natural History Museum were photographed as well as *Irish Period Furniture*, *Cross of Cong* and *Irish High Crosses* exhibitions.

Record photography of the *Asgard* conservation project continued throughout the year. Photography was undertaken of Folklife material for website and publicity purposes as well as of the storage spaces in Daingean Co. Offaly. The Department also provided support and technical advice for the scanning and procurement of the Wood Quay black and white negatives.

The Senior Photographer collaborated with the Head of Education to produce *The Image Safe Handbook* - guidelines for taking, managing and storing of photographic images of children and young people at the National Museum of Ireland.

Design

As part of the Services Division, the Design Department provides a quality design service to all Divisions/Departments within the National Museum of Ireland.

The Studio comprises of one Senior Graphic Artist and two Graphic Artists, together with the services of a contract illustrator. Services provided include graphic design, typography, layout and Illustration together with archaeological illustration and provision of location maps and plans for various publications and exhibitions.

2010 was a busy year for the Department, with the reopening of the Natural History Museum. The Department played a major role in the design of the internal graphic panels, external signage, redesign of activity sheets and a floor plan. The Department also worked with the Education Department on the provision of a 'Discovery Zone' area within the exhibition space.

The Department designed and produced Primary and Secondary level Schools Calendars for the Education Department. This will be an annual project for the Education Department.

As part of the Albert Bender exhibition a catalogue of the collection was designed and is due to be published in early 2011. This will be the fifth volume in the Monograph series from the NMI.

The Studio continues to work closely on the Dublin Excavations Publications Project and 2010 saw the publication of *Coopers and Coopering* which was launched in November.

New computer equipment was provided for the studio during the year, this will enable the Department to continue to deliver a high quality service using the most up to date design tools.

Facilities (Accommodation and Security)

The Facilities Department in organisational terms falls under the remit of the Services Division, providing front-of-house services to the four public and five reserve collection sites of the National Museum of Ireland.

The seventy front-of-house staff attended training courses during the year relating to areas as fire prevention, manual handling, safe pass and customer care training. Training is a vital component of the attendant's role ensuring they have the skills required to provide a quality front-of-house service to the general public. NMI attendants deliver a quality level of service and participate in a number of Committees from visitor services to health and safety.

We were grateful for the assistance the Office of Public Works provided on maintaining our buildings and for its assistance to shift snow at all our public sites during the inclement weather. Following a leak in the library, the NMI requested the Office of Public Works to carry out a hazard operational survey of Block 10, Collins Barracks and evaluate other buildings with a view to relocating the library. This process is ongoing.

The highlight of the year was the reopening of the Natural History Museum following the collapse of the staircase in 2007. During the year we had one retirement.

Administration

The Administration Division is responsible to the Director for the Financial Management, Human Resources Management and Information Communications Technology. A report on each of these three key areas is given below.

Financial Management

The 2010 allocations received from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism are as follows:

	€
○ Pay	7,644,000
○ Non Pay	5,481,000
○ Capital	2,000,000
Total	<u><u>€15,125,000</u></u>

As part of the annual business planning process, the capital and non-pay allocations from the Department were allocated to the NMI's internal budgets for expenditure.

The Finance Unit provided assistance and support to the Board's Audit Committee in carrying out its audit functions. This included working with the Internal Auditors (Deloitte).

In June and July of 2010, the Finance Unit co-ordinated the preparation of the NMI's 2011 expenditure *Estimates* submission in consultation with the relevant NMI budget holders. This submission was forwarded to the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism in July 2010.

The Finance Unit prepared the Financial Statements for 2010 and accompanying audit file in early 2011. The C&AG audit of the 2010 Financial Statements took place in June 2011. The Finance Unit will provide appropriate additional information and clarification as requested by the C&AG at the time of audit. The NMI's accounts in respect of the year ending 31st December 2010, which have been audited by the C&AG and prepared in accordance with the requirements of section 35 of the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997, are included in this report.

The NMI's Procurement Officers are mainly from the Finance Unit and Services Division, with the Finance Manager being responsible for the management of the procurement process of all National and EU procurements. To this end, the NMI is building internal expertise in the area of procurement. Structured procedures and policies are in place and are complemented with a filing system for procurement.

On an annual basis, business plans are developed and implemented. These business plans encompass Risk Management and staff PMDS together with budgetary requirements

Human Resource Management

The year 2010 was a demanding year. Human Resources (HR) continued to work closely with Divisional Heads on the varying issues at departmental level. Despite an increase in the number of vacancies as a consequence of the moratorium which was introduced at the end of March 2009, the hard work and commitment from all staff enabled NMI to continue to deliver a high standard of quality service to the public with little disruption. In this climate, NMI was very fortunate to receive sanction to recruit for a new position of Manager of the Collections Resource Centre in Swords. The position was filled by open competition in August 2010.

Training

NMI continued to implement and develop its staff performance management development system (PMDS) in 2010.

The training budget was restricted due to a reduced allocation; however, every effort was made to obtain value for money using in-house courses where possible. The training provided included Dignity at Work; Writing for the Web; Project Management and Data Protection. In addition, specialised training was provided for staff working in the collections and the conservation areas. An ECDL course was successfully completed by seven staff and in addition, modules in Microsoft Word; Excel and Access from beginners to advanced level were undertaken by a number of staff during November and December. A support group of six contact persons to NMI's anti-bullying and harassment policy "A Positive Working Environment" received training for their role in March and September to ensure they were competent in providing the support required for the role. HSE provided invaluable support in providing 'Keep Safe' child protection training for staff across all sites.

During the academic year 2009/2010 ten staff undertook approved third level courses of education in their own time and availed of the percentage Refund of Fees Scheme in accordance with the Department of Finance guidelines. Staff members attended conferences relating to Archaeology, Dress and Textiles, Wood, Paper, the Natural Sciences collections and the Irish Museums Association.

Ethics in Public Office

Staff in designated positions of employment and all NMI Board members complied with the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001. In January of each year, designated staff members and board members make an annual statement of interests in respect of the preceding year.

Freedom of Information (FOI)

HR co-ordinated two requests under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003.

Occupational Health

Fifty-two staff availed of the Mini Health Checks and forty-five staff availed of the flu vaccinations provided by Corporate Health Ireland. In addition, a confidential staff assistance service was provided by Stephanie Regan and Associates

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

In 2010, NMI Statement of Strategy was updated and the section *Exploit capacity of ICT to deliver Museum services* was developed to include 8 major development axes, underpinned by multiple-year projects and activities. During the year a lot of progress was made along these axes, together with the day-to-day operations and user support, and the annual hardware/software maintenance and upgrades.

The Department helped departments deal with shrinking resources by automating some activities. ICT engaged with HR to coordinate ICT Training programmes across departments (ECDL, specialist office, writing for the web, Website Content Management System).

ICT reduced the risk of major data loss and disaster consequences by developing an ICT/Data Disaster Recovery plan. A review of information systems controls was also carried out by the internal auditors. The NMI also subscribed to two ESCROW contracts to protect its software investment.

ICT engaged further with third party organisations (National Disability Agency, CLARITY, Irish Manuscript Commission-National Aggregator for Europeana) to explore new technology, increase accessibility to the collections and work towards international standards.

Website improvements were led by the analysis of NMI's ongoing online survey, website access statistics, and activities in galleries. New pages on existing exhibitions were written specifically for the Website and existing pages were improved. The online shop products portfolio increased. The *Visit Us* section was restructured and rewritten to be a more user-centric ensemble of practical information. All NMI's multilingual guides were published online in order to increase international interest.

Infrastructure improvements were made to NMI's network to include the Collection Resource Centre in Swords, stores in Daingean, galleries, stores and conference rooms of NMI-Decorative Arts and History, and in Education Resource rooms of all sites by cabling, WIFI and VLAN configurations. The virtual servers' operating systems was upgraded to 64-bit 2008 version; three e-mail servers were upgraded and consolidated into one and the Intranet platform was updated.

Gallery and public facing related activities included the deployment of digital displays and PCs at all reception areas; procurement and implementation of audio-video presentations in the High Crosses exhibition, development of a system to automatically produce the calendar of events; the inventory and back-up library of audio-video and interactive displays and the procurement of an audio guide platform for the future Treasury exhibition. ICT, together with the Education Department created a proof-of-concept for the 3D-modelling of exhibitions with CLARITY (Centre for Sensor Web Technologies, a partnership between University

College Dublin, Dublin City University and Tyndall National Institute –TNI- Cork), based on the *Iconic Treasures* exhibition at the NMI-Archaeology.

ICT assisted the Documentation Department with the merging of the collection management systems; Finance Department's inventory of assets; Marketing Department's contacts database and updating the Education Department's booking system. The Department was also central in starting-up two cross-divisional workgroups that will focus on a digitisation programme (one workgroup with the mission of defining standards, the other of defining a 10-year plan).

Internal processes were also improved with ICT's help. The Documentation department's efforts in merging collection management systems, the Finance department's inventory of assets at all sites, the Marketing department's contacts database and the Education booking system were all updated and progressed. The ICT department increased the design and use of a central corporate database. It was also key in starting-up and chairing two cross-division workgroups that will focus on digitisation (one workgroup with the mission of defining standards, the other of defining a 10-year plan).

