

Introduction

This is issue number five of centrenews. We hope that you will find it interesting reading. Our newsletter is published for members and friends of the Centre and for all those with an interest in relations between Ireland and the German-speaking world.

Würth Scholar becomes Junior Professor - Claire O'Reilly, the first holder of the Centre's Würth Scholarship, was awarded her PhD in December 2001 for "The Expatriate Life: A Study of German Expatriates and Their Spouses on Assignment in Ireland and the Development of Culture Training and Expatriate Support based on Their Adjustment Experiences". Dr O'Reilly has now been offered a Junior Professorship in Intercultural Studies at the Universität Chemnitz. We congratulate Dr O'Reilly on her achievement.

Swiss Lektor at UL - Michael Gwerder is the first *Swiss Lektor* in Ireland and will be teaching at the University of Limerick, both at the main campus and Mary Immaculate College. He will support the work of the Centre for Irish-German Studies, particularly in the area of Irish-Swiss relations (for more information see below). The creation of the position was made possible by the support of the Swiss Embassy in Dublin and Presence Switzerland, an organisation of the Swiss government established to promote Switzerland abroad.

Some changes in the membership have taken place - Dr Joachim Lerchenmueller has left the Centre. He is currently in Germany, on a Government of Ireland Research Fellowship in the Humanities and Social Sciences, pursuing his research interest in contemporary history. The Centre welcomes its new members Dr Patricia Conlan, Department of Law, University of Limerick, and Sabine Egger, Department of German Studies, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick.

New members

Patricia Conlan, Lecturer in European Law at the University of Limerick, has had a long-standing interest in Germany. BA subjects included German and Legal Science as well as Italian and French. She was the recipient of a Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) scholarship, Council of Europe Human Rights Fellowship and Goethe-Institut Großes Sprachdiplom. LL.B and LL.M (NUI) were followed by Dr iuris (Tübingen) and a period as Assistant at the Chair of her Doktorvater, Professor Dr Dr hc Oppermann (Lehrstuhl für Staats- und Verwaltungsrecht, Völkerrecht, Europarecht und Auswärtige Politik) and as a member of a Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (DFG)-funded interdisciplinary research group. She is a regular participant and contributor to the annual Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Colloquium organised at the Fritz-Erkler-Akademie, Freudenberg. The focus is Europe of the Regions, bringing together researchers and politicians from Germany and peripheral regions. Research interests and publications include international trade, free movement of labour, labour law, European Social Policy, the rule of law and enlargement. Of specific relevance to the Centre is her book on the relevance of EEC provisions on labour mobility for Irish accession to the EEC, taking movement from Ireland to Germany as a case study. Given the coincidence of the over supply of workers in Ireland during the 1950s (and later), and the contemporaneous German Recruitment Commissions, it is interesting to reflect on why no attempt was ever made to reconcile these supply/demand imbalances.

Sabine Egger is a Lecturer in German Studies at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. She graduated with an MA in English, German and Economics from the University of Cologne in 1996. Her interest in (inter-)cultural studies and Ireland developed during her studies in Cologne, and informed her MA thesis on "Konstrukte irischer Identität in der *Poetry of Place* John Montagues und Derek Mahons" as well as her work as a freelance producer of programmes on Irish literature and culture for WDR Radio, Cologne. Presently completing her doctorate at the Humboldt-University of Berlin on historical discourse and images of the "Other" in the poetry of Johannes Bobrowski and Peter Huchel, she has published articles on history and collective identity in poetry, and on cultural change in 20th century Germany. Further research interests include the teaching and learning of literature and intercultural competence at tertiary and primary level. Her most recent publication is "Komparatistische Imagologie im interkulturellen Literaturunterricht" in *Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht* [Online], 6 (3), 2002, 1-19. It explores, with a special focus on Irish third-level students reading German literature, how an imagological approach to foreign language literary texts may help students to develop intercultural

awareness.

Grüezi mitenand! (Swiss German for - bad translation - "I greet you all")
My name is **Michael Gwerder**. Since September 2002, I have been the *Swiss Lektor* at the University of Limerick, teaching in the German Section of the Dept of Languages and Cultural Studies and the Dept of German Studies, Mary Immaculate College. Born and raised in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, I attended the University of Lausanne in the French-speaking part of the country. I graduated in 2001 with an MA in German language and literature, and minor subjects English and Spanish. The title of my thesis was "Heldeninszenierung am Beispiel von Schillers *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*". During my studies, I worked as a foreign language teacher for different institutions in Switzerland. Last year, I taught German language, literature and culture at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI, U.S.A. My specific task at the University of Limerick is to introduce students to various aspects of Swiss culture through the teaching of German as a foreign language, in order to strengthen cross-cultural understanding. Moreover, I will be the contact person for any queries and projects regarding Swiss-Irish relations. The creation of the position was made possible by the support of the Swiss Embassy in Dublin and Presence Switzerland.

Publications

Exil in Irland – John Hennigs Schriften zu deutsch-irischen Beziehungen (Trier: WVT 2002, 578 pp, ISBN 3-88476-506-X, €39.50), edited by Gisela Holfter and Hermann Rasche, was launched on 25 January 2002 in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin by Dr Peter Harbison. It was a very special day, as John Hennig's daughter Monica Schefold had returned to Dublin for this occasion for the first time after many decades. Wolfgang Somary, whose deceased wife Gabriele was Hennig's eldest daughter, came from Switzerland. The book contains a detailed study of John Hennig's extraordinary life and his writings on Irish-German relations including autobiographical writings on his time in Ireland. John (Johannes) Hennig, who had married his Jewish fiancée, Kläre Meyer, in 1933, arrived in Ireland in 1939. He became one of the main researchers on German-Irish relations and published more than 900 articles - a truly outstanding achievement, particularly when taking into account that he was not supported by any academic institution.

Das Deutschlandbild der Iren 1890-1939 (Heidelberg: C. Winter 2000, 680 pp, ISBN 3-8253-1061-2, €69) by Joachim Fischer had its German launch at the Irish Embassy in Berlin on 21 June 2002.

Business Lecture Series

Among the speakers in this year's Business Lecture Series of the Centre for Irish-German Studies were Dr Heike Knorz (PH Karlsruhe), Prof Jürgen Bolten (Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena) and Prof Alexander Thomas (Universität Regensburg).

Prof Bolten addressed the newly founded Business German in Ireland Working Group. For further information contact Dr Gisela Holfter, Dept of Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Limerick, 061-202395, gisela.holfter@ul.ie

Conferences

"3rd Limerick Conference in Irish-German Studies - Ireland and the German-speaking Countries: Irish-Austrian and Irish-Swiss Relations and Questions of Identity in Austria and Switzerland", 4-6.4.2002

The "3rd Limerick Conference in Irish-German Studies" took place at the University of Limerick, 4-6 April 2002 and proved yet another successful undertaking of the Centre for Irish-German Studies. It was organised by Dr Gisela Holfter, Dr Marieke Krajenbrink and Prof Edward Moxon-Browne (Centre for European Studies at UL). The conference focussed on Irish-Austrian and Irish-Swiss relations, and on questions of identity in Austria and Switzerland. Among the high-profile speakers were: Prof Werner Welzig, President of the Austrian Academy of Science; Dr Paul Leifer, Austrian Ambassador; Ms Claudia Schmitz, 1st Secretary, German Embassy; Mr Michel Faillietaz, Cultural Attaché, Swiss Embassy; Dr Beatrice von Matt, Swiss critic and journalist, Neue Zürcher Zeitung; Prof Joep Leerssen, Chair of Modern European Literature, Amsterdam University. Among the highlights was the announcement Mr Faillietaz's announcement of a Swiss Lektor position to be established in Limerick, the first of its kind in Ireland. Exhibitions of works by René Böll and Ruth Lockhard, and on "Travellers to Austria", readings by Erica Pedretti and Josef Winkler and a concert by the Swiss violinists Maya Homburger and Guy Barry completed the conference programme.

The conference was supported by the Austrian, German and Swiss Embassies, the College of Humanities at the University of Limerick, Pro Helvetia and Presence Switzerland, and took place in co-ordination with the German Departments of NUI Galway and the University of Ulster, Coleraine. The publication of selected conference papers, edited by G. Holfter, M. Krajenbrink and E. Moxon-Browne, is forthcoming.

**"Wagner and Wagnerism: Contexts –Connections – Controversies",
9-10.8.2002**

The Centre jointly organised (with the Dept of Music at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, and the Dept of Music at University College Cork) the conference "Wagner and Wagnerism: Contexts - Connections - Controversies" at the University of Limerick as part of the Wagner *Ring* Festival 2002. The Wagner *Ring* Festival ran from 5 -10 August at the University Concert Hall, Limerick, and featured the first Wagner *Ring* Cycle in Ireland in 90 years (!) - the previous one had been performed at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, in 1913. Given the great success and interest that both *Ring* performances and conference sparked, it might well be staged again soon. Over the two days of the conference many of the world's leading Wagner specialists delivered papers to the conference, including Nike Wagner, great granddaughter of Richard Wagner, Dieter Borchmeyer (Heidelberg), John Deathridge (London), Joachim Fischer (Limerick), Peter Franklin (Oxford), John Kelly (Oxford), David J. Levin (Chicago), Barry Millington (London), Wilfried van der Will (Birmingham), Susanne Vill (Bayreuth), and Marc Weiner (Bloomington, IND). The programme also featured a screening of Fritz Lang's historic film *Die Nibelungen* (1924) and the exhibition "Wagnereien", etchings on Wagnerian themes by Stephan Klenner-Otto.

The organising committee (Dr Gareth Cox, Dr Joachim Fischer, Dr Marieke Krajenbrink and Dr Christopher Morris) was supported by the German Embassy, Dublin, the Goethe-Institut, Dublin, the University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College, University College Cork and Plassey Campus Centre.

The *Yearbook* aims to provide all those interested in Ireland and the German-speaking countries with up-to-date information on current affairs, trends and new perspectives in Irish-German relations, covering matters political, social, economic, cultural and academic.

Yearbook 2001/2002

The Yearbook of the Centre for Irish-German Studies 2001/2002 is on its way, but due to the many activities this year, it will be slightly delayed. We

would like to ask all organisations involved in Irish-German relations to send us contributions on their last year's activities, if they have not done so already. Please send these by post or e-mail to: Dr. Joachim Fischer, Dept of Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Limerick, joachim.fischer@ul.ie

Research projects

New project:

- Dr Gisela Holfter (project leader) and Dr Claire O'Reilly were awarded a Grant for Academic Research Collaboration in Economics and Social Science in Spring 2002 under a scheme run by the Royal Irish Academy and the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD). Their topic is Intercultural Competence for German and Irish Exchange Students. This is a joint project with Prof Alexander Thomas, Universität Regensburg.

Ongoing projects:

- *Irish-German Contacts in the 17th and 18th Centuries* (J. Fischer)
- *Travel Literature in Irish* (J. Fischer)
- *Cross-cultural Travel - German Travel Descriptions of Ireland in the 19th Century* (J. Fischer, G. Holfter (UL); E. Bourke, H. Rasche (NUI Galway)). The research project is supported by the Centre for the Study of Human Settlement and Historical Change, NUI Galway
- *Heinrich Böll and Ireland* (G. Holfter)
- *Exiles in Ireland* - After their publication on John Hennig, G. Holfter and H. Rasche (NUI Galway) continue with the broader topic of German-speaking exiles in Ireland 1933-1945. Should readers of the newsletter be able to help us with this research we would be very grateful. Please contact: Dr Gisela Holfter, Dept of Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Limerick, 061-202395, gisela.holfter@ul.ie
- *Images of Ireland in Contemporary Austrian Literature* (M. Krajenbrink)
- *Swiss Press Representation of Ireland's Rejection of the Nice Treaty* (V. O'Regan);
Dr O'Regan presented a conference paper on the topic during the "3rd Limerick Conference of the Centre for German-Irish Studies"

The Centre's book collection, situated in room GL035 in the Glucksman Library of the University of Limerick campus, has grown again, thanks to contributions from several publishers (particularly Piper and Diogenes), the Swiss Embassy, the Austrian Embassy and the Goethe-Institut. Thanks to all donors!

Book collection

Making the connection

It is the express aim of the Centre to initiate, moderate and further collaboration between people & institutions in Ireland and the German-speaking countries.

The centre is looking forward to another enterprising year. We would very much like to welcome you here at UL - as a fellow academic, a visitor to one of our events, and as a Member or Friend of the Centre for Irish-German Studies.

Visit our homepage at
<http://www.ul.ie/~lcs/irish-german.html>