

Oak Room Heritage Talks

Spring/Summer Series: March - June 2025

Dublin City Council's Heritage Office is hosting a series of free public lectures highlighting a broad range of heritage topics and projects in Dublin city.



**19th
March**

Dr Kathleen Lynn: a public and private radical

Speaker: Dr Mary McAuliffe

Date: Weds 19th Mar, 6-7pm

Venue: Oak Room,
Mansion House



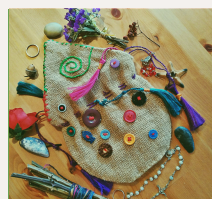
**23rd
April**

Dublin's Railway Architecture

Speaker: Dr Siobhan Osgood

Date: Weds 23rd Apr, 6-7pm

Venue: Oak Room,
Mansion House



**21st
May**

Challenging the Narrative: Reclaiming Traveller History in Ireland's National Collections

Speaker: Oein DeBhairduin

Date: Weds 21st May, 6-7pm

Venue: Oak Room,
Mansion House



**25th
June**

Queer Joy and Loss: Ambivalent Intersections and Celebrating Dublin's Hirschfeld Centre, 1979-1987

Speaker: Dr Páraic Kerrigan

Date: Weds 25th Jun, 6-7pm

Venue: Oak Room,
Mansion House



Autumn/Winter 2025...

(Bookings will open in July)



**20th
Aug**

Four Dublin Churches
Dr Brendan Grimes



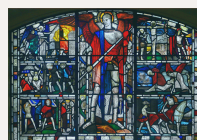
**24th
Sept**

TCD's Colonial Legacies
Dr Patrick Walsh



**1st
Oct**

19C Insurance Companies
Dr Grace O'Keeffe



**8th
Oct**

20C Stained Glass
Dr David Caron



**5th
Nov**

TCD's Anatomy Museum
Evi Numen



Scan the QR code to book your free place.

An ISL interpreter will be present at all talks unless stated otherwise.
The Oak Room is wheelchair accessible.

Visit @heritage_dublin on X for updates.
Email heritage@dublincity.ie with any queries.

An action of the Dublin City Strategic Heritage Plan 2024-29.



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Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

Oak Room Heritage Talks

March - November 2025



19th
March

Dr Kathleen Lynn: a public and private radical

Speaker: Dr Mary McAuliffe **Date:** Weds 19th Mar, 6-7pm

Dr Kathleen Lynn: a public and private radical



About this talk

Using her diaries, Dr Mary McAuliffe will discuss the life, public and private, of the feminist, socialist and revolutionary, Dr Kathleen Lynn. The women of Lynn's generation, many of whom came to feminism, socialism, and militant nationalism in the first decade of the 1900s, not only chose radical politics, but they also chose radical lives. She began her public life among the generation of radicals who committed their lives to three great ideologies, freedom for workers, women and Ireland, and her professional life in her other great venture, St Ultan's Hospital for Sick Infants, which she cofounded. She was also among a cohort of who choose not just radical politics, but radical love-Lynn and her partner Madeleine ffrench Mullen are among a cohort of revolutionary who choose to who choose to make their lives with each other.

About the speaker

Dr Mary McAuliffe is a historian and lecturer at Gender Studies UCD. Her latest publications include (co-authored with Harriet Wheelock) *The Diaries of Kathleen Lynn: A Life Revealed through Personal Writing* (2023) and *Margaret Skinnider*; a biography (2020). Other publications include (co-edited with Miriam Haughton and Emilie Pine) *Legacies of the Magdalen Laundries: Commemoration, gender, and the postcolonial carceral state* (2021), and is co-editor (with Jennifer Redmond) of *The politics of gender and sexuality in modern Ireland; A Reader* (UCD Press, 2024). She is currently completing her book *Gendered and Sexual Violence in the Irish War of Independence and Civil War, 1919-1923* (forthcoming 2025). She is a past President of the Women's History Association of Ireland and is a member of the Humanities Institute, UCD and the Women's Museum Advocacy Group.



Dr Kathleen Lynn and her partner, Madeleine ffrench-Mullen



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23rd
April

Dublin's Railway Architecture

Speaker: Dr Siobhan Osgood Date: Weds 23rd Apr, 6-7pm

Dublin's Railway Architecture



About this talk

On Wednesday 17 December 1834 the first passenger railway line in Ireland opened as the Dublin and Kingstown Railway Company, with its central termini at Westland Row. Over the next four decades thousands of miles of railway tracks were spliced through Ireland's landscape, creating an expansive web of public connectivity and human endeavour. Ireland's capital city further gained a total of five terminal railway stations: Harcourt Street, Broadstone, Heuston, and Connolly, with each demonstrating the style and ambition of each respective railway company. Join this talk to find out more about the history of railway development in Dublin through the architecture of its terminal stations, the architects and engineers who designed them, and the Irish manufacturers and builders who made them manifest.

About the speaker

Dr Siobhan Osgood is a railway and architectural historian specialising in industrial archaeology and nineteenth-century building practices. She completed her doctoral thesis 'Building the Great Northern Railway (Ireland): Design, Communication and Construction', at Trinity College Dublin, funded by the Irish Research Council. Find out more at: www.railwayarchitecture.com



Connolly Station. Image courtesy of Siobhan Osgood



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21st
May

Challenging the Narrative: Reclaiming Traveller History in Ireland's National Collections

Speaker: Oein DeBhairduin **Date:** Weds 21st May, 6-7pm

Challenging the Narrative: Reclaiming Traveller History in Ireland's National Collections



About this talk

This talk explores the importance of co-curation and community-led approaches in reshaping how Irish Traveller history is represented in national collections. It examines past exclusions, challenges dominant narratives, and highlights efforts to ensure authentic, meaningful inclusion of Traveller heritage in Ireland's cultural institutions.

About the speaker

Oein DeBhairduin (Inclusive Histories Curator - Traveller Culture) is an award-winning author and cultural worker dedicated to preserving and sharing Irish Traveller heritage. As a Traveller and member of the National Museum of Ireland team, he plays a key role in fostering inclusive representation within national collections. Oein is deeply involved in storytelling, folklore, and traditional crafts, working to reclaim and celebrate Traveller history through both academic and creative initiatives.



Contemporary beady pocket. Image courtesy of Oein DeBhairduin.



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25th
Jun

Queer Joy and Loss: Ambivalent Intersections and Celebrating Dublin's Hirschfeld Centre, 1979-1987

Speaker: Dr Páraic Kerrigan **Date:** Weds 25th Jun, 6-7pm

Queer Joy and Loss: Ambivalent Intersections and Celebrating Dublin's Hirschfeld Centre, 1979-1987



About this talk

On St. Patrick's Day in 1979, the Hirschfeld Centre opened its doors at 10 Fownes St in Dublin and became one of the most significant institutions in queer Irish history. Despite operating for only eight years, the political, social and cultural activities of the Hirschfeld made it a key space for an emerging queer community and an important site for the development of queer Irish culture. In the decades since its closure after a fire in 1987, the Hirschfeld has functioned as a site of individual and collective remembering. Drawing from oral histories, memoirs, and archival research, this talk highlights the Centre as a site of ambivalence—a place where queer joy flourished alongside experiences of marginalization and loss. The Centre functioned as an engine of political transformation, housing the National Gay Federation (NGF) and other activist groups that campaigned for homosexual law reform and provided support during the HIV/AIDS crisis. Yet, the Hirschfeld was also a social and cultural hub. Flikkers, its groundbreaking disco, fostered a queer cosmopolitanism, connecting Dublin to the global gay scene while providing a safe, celebratory space for local LGBTQ+ individuals. The Centre nurtured chosen families and built community resilience against the violence and surveillance that characterized Irish queer life at the time. Ultimately, the Hirschfeld Centre emerges as an ephemeral archive—a space whose material presence was lost to fire in 1987, but whose emotional and political legacies continue to shape Irish queer historiography. By celebrating this intersection of joy and loss, this talk underscores the Hirschfeld Centre's enduring place in the story of Irish LGBTQ+ resistance, resilience, and community formation.

About the speaker

Dr Páraic Kerrigan is an author, researcher and Assistant Professor in the School of Information and Communication Studies at University College Dublin. He has published widely as an academic and critic. His first book LGBTQ Visibility, Media and Sexuality in Ireland was published by Routledge in 2021. His most recent book, Reeling in the Queers, was released for Pride 2024.



*The Hirschfeld Centre, Temple Bar, 1987.
Image by Derek Speirs.*



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20th
Aug

Four Dublin Churches

Speaker: Dr Brendan Grimes **Date:** Weds 20th Aug, 6-7pm

Four Dublin Churches



About this talk

Roman Catholic church building in Dublin flourished in the 19th century. The lecture seeks to explain some of the reasons why and how this came about by discussing four of Dublin's important churches. The churches chosen are the Pro-Cathedral (1825); Saint Francis Xavier, Gardiner Street (1829); Saint Andrew's, Westland Row (1832); Our Lady of Refuge, Rathmines (1850). The architectural language used for the churches was determined by the patrons and architects and the lecture examines the influences which determined this language. The influences included international Neo-classicism, Roman classicism, the Greek revival, and traditional building methods. Important influences from Paris on the Dublin churches are the late 18th century basilican plan and temple fronted churches. The lecture examines the nature and influence of the clerical patrons. To match the architectural ambitions of the patrons, sufficient money had to be provided. How the money was collected and the essential part the Catholic laity played in providing voluntary work and the funds, to build the churches is discussed.

About the speaker

Dr Brendan Grimes is an architectural historian. He lectured in Dublin Institute of Technology from 1983 until his retirement in 2010. His publications include, *Irish Carnegie Libraries: A catalogue and architectural history*, Dublin 1998; *Majestic Shrines and Graceful Sanctuaries: The Church Architecture of Patrick Byrne 1783-1864*, Dublin 2009; *Commodious Temples: Roman Catholic church building in nineteenth-century Dublin*, Dublin 2010. He is currently collaborating with Colm O'Brien on the County Dublin volume of the *Buildings of Ireland*.



Left: Saint Francis Xavier, Gardiner Street.

Right: Saint Andrews, Westland Row.



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24th
Sept

Cultivating Virtue? Trinity College Dublin and its Colonial Legacies

Speaker: Dr Patrick Walsh Date: Weds 24th Sep, 6-7pm

Cultivating Virtue? Trinity College Dublin and its Colonial Legacies

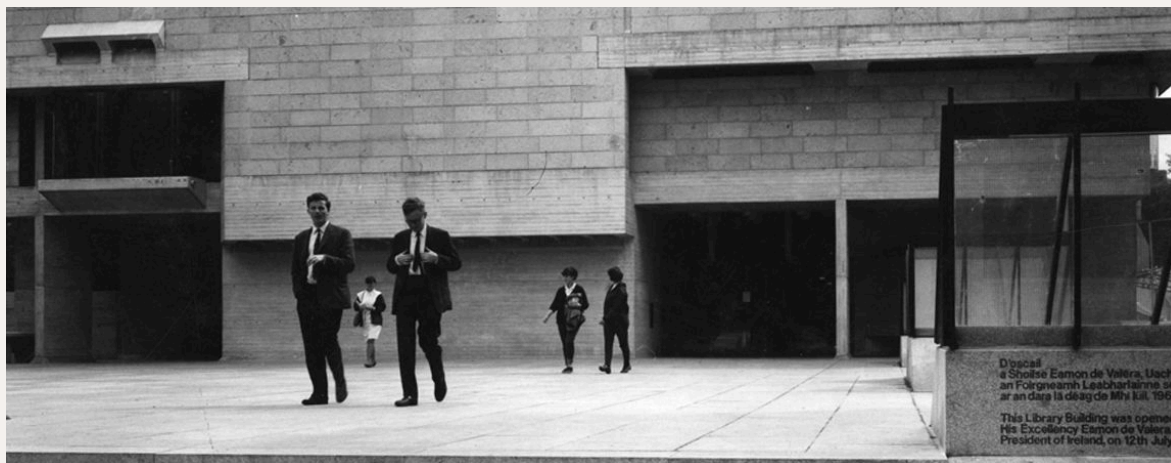


About this talk

This public lecture will explore the colonial legacies of Trinity College Dublin. It will explore how the university was from its foundation a colonial university albeit one strongly connected into the politics and social milieu of reformation Dublin. It will present new research on Trinity's entanglements with empire including but not limited to its historic connections to the slave trade. It will explore the representation of these colonial legacies in the university over time and how the Trinity has reckoned and continues to reckon with its past. Particular attention will be paid to how the Trinity story connects to the historic links between Dublin city and colonialism and how our investigation of Trinity's colonial legacies might lead to thinking anew about Dublin's colonial legacies and their public representation.

About the speaker

Dr Patrick Walsh is Associate Professor of Eighteenth-Century Irish History at Trinity College Dublin. He is with Dr Ciaran O'Neill one of the Co-Directors of the Trinity Colonial Legacies Project



The New Library in TCD (1967). Public Domain.



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1st
Oct

Nineteenth century insurance companies in Dublin

Speaker: Dr Grace O'Keeffe **Date:** Weds 1st Oct, 6-7pm

Nineteenth century insurance companies in Dublin



About this talk

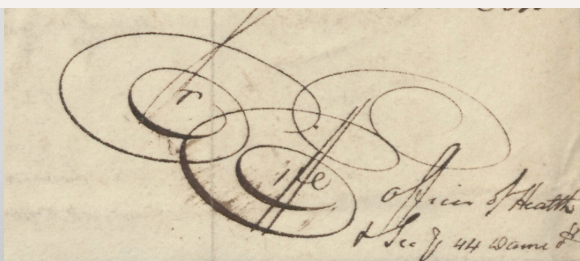
...But Dignam's put the boots in. Houses of mourning so depressing because you never know. Anyway she wants the money. Must call to those Scottish widows as I promised. Strange name. Takes it for granted we're going to pop off first.

James Joyce. *Ulysses*. The 1922 text (New edition, Oxford, 2022), p. 363.

One of Ireland's most famous works of fiction, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, has its own day of celebration every year on 16 June, the date during which all the events in the novel take place. Insurance companies are not typically part of these celebrations, but insurance is very much a part of *Ulysses*. Insurance is also very much part of the development of nineteenth-century Dublin. In 1834 Christopher Eiffe became the first manager of Caledonian Life (now Royal London Ireland) in Ireland. He oversaw the development of the company, the purchase of their new fire engine and fleet, while also working in support of Daniel O'Connell. This talk will give an insight into the impact of one man, and one company, in mid-nineteenth century Dublin.

About the speaker

Dr Grace O'Keeffe completed her PhD on medieval Dublin in Trinity College Dublin. She is editor of *Archaeology Ireland* and online editor of *History Ireland*. She also works as a freelance historical consultant and has worked on various projects for Dublin City Council, the Royal Irish Academy and Royal London Ireland.



Left: A twentieth-century reproduction of the Caledonian fire mark. Courtesy of Las Fallon.

Right: Christopher Eiffe's signature. Reproduced by kind permission of the Director of the National Archives.



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Oak Room Heritage Talks

March - November 2025



8th
Oct

Twentieth century stained glass in Dublin

Speaker: Dr David Caron

Date: Weds 8th Oct, 6-7pm

Twentieth century stained glass in Dublin



About this talk

During the twentieth century Dublin's reputation as a centre for stained glass excellence, both in terms of artistry and craftsmanship, was internationally lauded and is evidenced by the many orders placed by overseas patrons. The leading figures were Harry Clarke, Wilhelmina Geddes, Michael Healy, Evie Hone and Richard King, all of whom trained in Dublin, worked out of Dublin studios, and so it is not surprising that the city has a concentration of first rate stained glass by them and many others. The lecture will provide an overview of the principal artists and studios, illustrated with examples of their best windows in Dublin.

About the speaker

David Caron's PhD research at Trinity focused on Michael Healy and the stained glass artists of An Túr Gloine (Tower of Glass). He was one of the three original compilers of the Gazetteer of Irish stained glass in 1988, and was editor and principal author of the revised and expanded edition in 2021. Four Courts Press published his monograph, Michael Healy, 1873-1941: An Túr Gloine's stained glass pioneer in 2023 and will publish his most recent book, Dublin's Stained Glass – a guide to the finest twentieth-century windows, this autumn. David Caron regularly contributes articles on stained glass to the Irish Arts Review.



Stained glass by Harry Clarke.



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March - November 2025



5th
Nov

Silent Teachers to All: Opening the Doors of a Medical Museum at Trinity College Dublin

Speaker: Evi Numen

Date: Weds 5th Nov, 6-7pm

Silent Teachers to All: Opening the Doors of a Medical Museum at Trinity College Dublin



About this talk

Two hundred years ago, Professor of Anatomy James Macartney laid the foundation of the Museum of the School of Physic at Trinity College Dublin. The museum was to form the crux of the school's education program and hoped to rival renowned medical museums in the UK and beyond. Over the decades, its collections of human and animal specimens, models, artefacts and illustrations were added to, moved, buried, hidden, and recently re-discovered.

What is the role of a 200-year-old museum of anatomy and pathology in 2025? What can we learn from the lives and memories of those who contributed to medical science? As we catalogue, conserve, and curate a collection previously kept behind closed doors, we consider how to re-draw the role of the medical museum in a contemporary public context, while addressing political and social disparities. In doing so, we are inevitably called to grapple with questions of mortality and the diversity of the human experience.

About the speaker

Evi Numen is the Curator of the Old Anatomy Museum of Trinity College Dublin. Since 2018 she has been working on a project to catalogue, conserve, and curate the medical heritage collection of the School of Medicine. She holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Before her current engagement, she held the position of Exhibitions Manager & Designer at the Mutter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia from 2009 to 2016. Her research interests include 19th-century dissection, medical museum practices, and their intersections with end-of-life rituals.



Trinity College Dublin Anatomy Museum, 1933.



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