



CORK 2020

EXHIBITIONS &
PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Cork 1920 - 13 Brunswick Street -
IRA Intelligence Headquarters

Later we were permitted to speak to the prisoners. They were gathered round Tomas each recounting his own story. How far he had got with his speech and the effect it had. The Tomas listening, convulsed with laughter could only wipe away the tears of sheer mischevious joy. It was his plan and it had worked exactly as he had expected.

Remembering Cork 1920

Presented by St Peter's Cork, Cork City Libraries,
Cork Public Museum, and Cork City & County Archives

A night in March 1920. Cork's Lord Mayor after a busy day in that capacity, visits his Volunteer H.Q. late at night and does some army work. Ready to go he questions what are you knitting Nora. A rumble in the night ! I thought it might be socks for some fellow! Mind no courting my boys 'till the war is over. You'll have something else to do and I dont want any of them to be leaving widows. But when the war is over-A voice from outside interrupted Come on out of here this is no place for the Lord Mayor of Cork an Alderman of this ancient city is fitter company than these common rebels. Smiling Tomas wagged a warning fore finger mind what I said!



Image Courtesy of Cork City and County Archives



Foreword

Cllr. John Sheahan,
Lord Mayor of Cork

1920 was a year of crucial importance in Irish history, a year when the city and county of Cork was the 'cockpit of the revolution' to quote the Atlas of the Irish Revolution. I am confident that the city, led by the City Council, will remember and mark the centenary of 1920 in a fitting manner.

The election of Tomás MacCurtain as Lord Mayor of Cork in January 1920 was of huge significance, nationally as well as locally. His assassination on 20 March made world headlines, and the shocking reality of the murder of a democratically elected First Citizen still resonates to this day. His successor as Lord Mayor, Terence MacSwiney, had already provided the intellectual basis for an independent Irish state, one which would have a central role for cultural expression, especially our Gaelic culture. His was a generous and outward looking cultural nationalism, and not a narrow political stance.

This coming autumn we will remember and commemorate some of the most important events in the struggle for independence. The hunger strike of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney struck a chord not only in Europe but in British colonies in Asia and Africa. His death, and the funeral in Cork at the end of October, attended by a huge crowd, received massive media coverage. The commemoration of these events, 100 years on, will be the highpoint of the Year of Commemoration.

Following the election of the third Lord Mayor of 1920, Dónal Óg O'Callaghan, there was a gathering storm, evident even then, with the Kilmichael ambush on 28 November, and soon after that fateful day 11 December, the day of the Dillon's Cross ambush, the killing of the Delaney brothers, and the Burning of the City.

We commemorate these events as a city, not merely to remember them, and certainly not to rake over old wounds, but rather to learn from the men and women of that era, whose vision and sacrifice gave our generation, and generations to follow, the freedom we now take for granted.

Cllr. John Sheahan, Lord Mayor of Cork

Overview of Civic Events in 2020

State Ceremonial Event

SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER

This will include a major commemoration with State ceremonial elements that will take place from MacSwiney Quay, in front of the City Hall, along South Mall, Grand Parade and St Patrick Street.

Centenary of election of Cllr Tomás MacCurtain as Lord Mayor

THURSDAY 30 JANUARY 18:30 TO 19:30

The Initiation of the Cork 1920 Commemoration will take place in the Chamber at City Hall and streamed to the foyer of Civic Offices. Following a musical performance, the Lord Mayor will read from the Minute of the Corporation meeting which elected MacCurtain as Lord Mayor.

This will be followed by the reading of the minute recording Cork Corporation's pledge of allegiance to Dáil Éireann.

Centenary of assassination of Lord Mayor MacCurtain

FRIDAY 20 MARCH 12:30 TO 14:30

In recognition of Tomás MacCurtain's passion and involvement in music, a music performance in the Millennium Hall at City Hall will take place. In addition, there will be a number of talks and reflections on his life and the impact he made.

Other events are being organised by the Blackpool Historical Society, the North Mon, Terence MacSwiney Community College and St. Peter's Cork.

Centenary of election of Cllr Terence MacSwiney as Lord Mayor

MONDAY 30 MARCH 18:30 TO 20:00

This event will take place in the Chamber at City Hall where the Lord Mayor will read from the Minute of the Corporation meeting which elected MacSwiney as Lord Mayor. MacSwiney's address on being elected will also be read.

Reading of relevant passages MacSwiney's book *Principles of Freedom*.

Centenary of the Death and burial of Lord Mayor Terence MacSwiney

25-31 OCTOBER

The Lord Mayor and the City Council will formally mark the death on hunger strike of the city's first citizen.

Full details will be available later in the year.

Centenary of election of Cllr Dónal Óg O'Callaghan as Lord Mayor

4 NOVEMBER 18:30 TO 20:00

Lord Mayor will read from the Minute of the Corporation meeting which elected O'Callaghan as Lord Mayor.

The main event in the Chamber at City Hall will be the official launch of the biography of Dónal Óg O'Callaghan by Dr Aodh Quinlivan, commissioned by the City Council, with a talk on his life and importance.

Centenary of the Burning of Cork

11 / 12 DECEMBER

Centenary of the burning of the city; close of year of commemoration.

Full details will be available later in the year.

CORK

1920

THE BURNING OF A CITY

Uncovering thought-provoking stories, archival material, historic photographs and compelling witness statements, St. Peter's Cork shines a spotlight on the city's past with a brand new exhibition: Cork 1920 – The Burning of a City.

A hugely tumultuous year in the city's lifespan, 1920 saw two Lord Mayors die tragically, martial law imposed and the British Crown forces' image of invincibility wane. A shocking end to an already tension-filled year, 1920 came to a head with the devastating burning of the city on 11 December.

Complementing this stunning exhibition, throughout 2020 St. Peter's Cork will also host a dedicated 1920-themed series of gatherings, talks and workshops.



OPENING
JANUARY 31ST
— DECEMBER
2020



www.stpeterscork.ie
North Main Street, Cork



Tomás
MacCurtain



Terence
MacSwiney



Joseph
Murphy



Michael
Fitzgerald

Suffering The Most – The Life And Times Of Tomás MacCurtain & Terence MacSwiney

Opening date: Thursday 19th March 2020

This exhibition tells the story of Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney, Cork's first two Republican Lord Mayors and will focus on aspects of their lives including family, culture, music and religion, their achievements, and their deaths, set against the backdrop of a country at war and a city in turmoil.

www.corkpublicmuseum.ie

The civic and military leadership shown by both men will highlight the pivotal role played by Cork during Ireland's War of Independence. The exhibition will also look at events such as the Cork Hunger Strike, the military and political campaigns in the city, the introduction of Martial Law and the series of arson attacks that culminated in the Burning of Cork in December 1920.

Cork – A County At War



Opening date: Saturday 15th August 2020,
(Running until August 2021)

County Cork played a major part in the War of Independence, witnessing a number of military engagements that would have a significant impact on both the nature and outcome of the conflict. Using original artefacts, images and documentation, this exhibition will illustrate the roles played by the Republican and Crown forces, while exploring their strategies, tactics, equipment and experiences of war.



Her Story

In honour of the revolutionary women of Cork who played a significant part in the events of 100 years ago, contributed to Irish nationhood and fought for women's political and civil rights, there are a number of exhibitions and events throughout 2020.



Muriel Murphy
MacSwiney

CORK CITY LIBRARIES PRESENT No Longer Forgotten: Cork Women of the Revolution

Opening date: Thursday 5th March 2020

This stunning exhibition will highlight the bravery and idealism of the women of Cork including:

- Muriel Murphy MacSwiney
- Cecilia Sanders Gallagher
- Alice Cashel
- Josephine Marchmont (O'Donoghue)
- Leslie Price
- Mary MacSwiney
- Hannah (Pidge) Duggan
- Annie MacSwiney

www.corkcitylibraries.ie

The City Library will host the History Roadshow 2020 in the City Library, Grand Parade.

On Saturday 28th March from 10 am until 4 pm

This Year's Speakers Are:

Myles Dungan:
'The War in the Shadows'

Kate O'Malley:
'Irish Revolutionary Women &
The Wider World'

Liz Gillis:
'1920 - Year of Terror'

Jonathan Creasy:
'Poetry, Prose & Song
of the 1920s'

Admission is free. Places are very limited and must be prebooked by emailing Helen_McGonagle@corkcity.ie or telephoning 021-4924929

Rebel Women Opening date: Friday 31st January

As part of its Cork 1920 exhibition, St. Peter's Cork presents a fully immersive visual & audio experience featuring stunning archival materials, witness statements and stories about some of the women who helped shape Cork city and the nation.

www.stpeterscork.ie

CORK
1920
THE BURNING
OF A CITY

In the last two months of 2020, and continuing into 2021, City Hall and the City Library will host a two-part exhibition:

Cork: A City Burned ~ A City Reborn in the City Hall

Cork: A Library Burned ~ A Library Reborn in The City Library

Cork: A City Burned ~ A City Reborn

This exhibition will explain how the heightening tensions and deepening conflict set the stage for the catastrophe which befell the city on the night of 11 / 12 December 1920. To comprehend how the city centre and the former City Hall and Carnegie Free Library came to be destroyed by arson, it is necessary to understand the events leading up to the catastrophe.

Featuring strong visual content – photos, maps, and ads for the shops which were destroyed – the exhibition will give a comprehensive account of what was lost on that awful night. It will also feature the immediate impact of the destruction, including rarely seen photographs of the aftermath.



The final section of the exhibition will tell the inspiring story of the rebirth of St Patrick Street, including the construction of the fine buildings which replaced those which had been destroyed, and the rebuilding of City Hall. It will compare the buildings lost in the fire with those which replaced them. The little-known role of Michael Collins in determining how the new city centre was planned and constructed will receive due attention.

www.corkcity.ie



Cork: A Library Burned ~ A Library Reborn

The sister exhibition will tell the story of the Library moving from its first location in Emmet Place to the elegant building on Anglesea Street in 1905. This library, funded by the Carnegie Trust, was built on a site provided by Cork Corporation, now the site of the civic offices adjoining City Hall.

The Carnegie Free Library had a pioneering attitude to a children's library service, providing a separate children's department, with seating for thirty children. The Library also included a dedicated Ladies Reading Room.

The exhibition will tell the story of the destruction of the Library as a result of the arson attack on City Hall by British military and police on the night of 11 / 12 December 1920. Whether the destruction of the Library was deliberate or not, the Library lost its complete reference bookstock and



all lending stock not out on loan at the time. It left James Wilkinson, then City Librarian, with a daunting challenge, but one he was equal to.

The last section will relate how the city was without a public library for almost four years, until a lending service was restored in temporary premises in Tuckey Street at the end of September 1924. The amazing story of how Wilkinson sought and received donations of books from people in Ireland, Britain, North America and many other parts of the world, will be revealed.

www.corkcitylibraries.ie





Enduring Legacy: Archives from Cork, 1920

Exhibition by Cork City and County Archives

Opening date: Wednesday 22nd January 2020

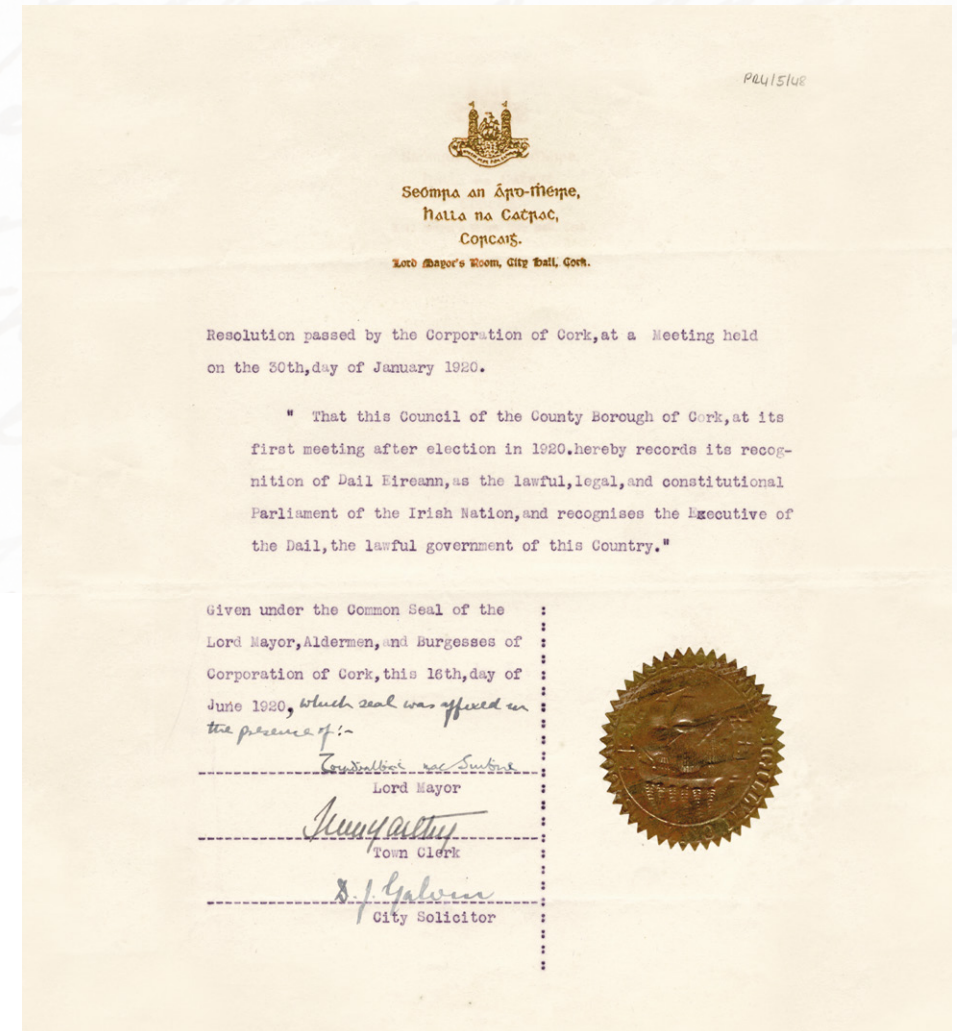
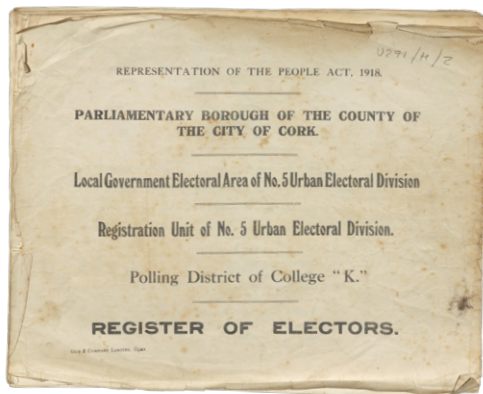
www.corkarchives.ie



We all live with the political, social, cultural, and economic legacy of the events of the historic 1912-1923 revolutionary period, but, there is also our lesser known legacy of the surviving local archives from that period, including archives from the momentous year 1920.

Local archives from 1920 are uncommon, as much was lost or destroyed, some perhaps lost in the destruction of City Hall in the Burning of Cork by Crown Forces in December 1920. Those that do survive, such as the original 1920 City Council Minute Book, and City Councillor and Irish Volunteer leader Liam de

Róiste's archive, are unique, invaluable historical and cultural artefacts. Cork City and County Archives Service is delighted to present an exhibition of a selection of surviving unique original local archives and documents from 1920, touching on various events and themes, including the first election in which women had the vote and also the first to use proportional representation, the election of the first republican dominated City Council, the election of the first



republican Lord Mayor, Tomás MacCurtain, and the pledge by the new Council of allegiance to Dáil Éireann, the assassination of Tomas MacCurtain, the election of Terence MacSwiney and his subsequent death on hunger strike,

and the Burning of Cork and the immediate reconstruction efforts, as well as the escalation of the Anglo-Irish conflict both militarily and politically in 1920.

Between 1919 and 1921, almost 1400 people died in the struggle for the recognition of an independent and free Ireland. Cork and its county saw the bloodiest of the fighting, in total 528 people lost their lives directly due to the conflict. Beyond the recognised memorials to the volunteers and major landmarks of significance there are many more sites where

men, women, children and members of the British forces lost their lives and are not acknowledged or marked in any way. Dara McGrath's photographic focus on these overlooked and unmarked sites give a timely, unnerving presence and look to reassert these lost lives into the history and its interpretation of this troubled time.

www.crawfordartgallery.ie

Citizen Nowhere / Citizen Somewhere

29 November 2020 – 21 March 2021 | Crawford Art Gallery

Citizen Nowhere / Citizen Somewhere focuses on the international legacy of Terence MacSwiney's hunger strike and death, and the idea of nation as an imagined state to which MacSwiney's own essays, *Principles of Freedom*, aspired. The exhibition will look at the often transitory nature of nationhood and features contemporary artists' responses to their own countries' status – many whose leaders had been directly influenced by MacSwiney's words and actions – from being citizen of nowhere, under direct rule, to being a citizen of somewhere after liberation.

www.crawfordartgallery.ie

Public Lecture Programme with
UCC School of History

Throughout the year there will be a series of free lectures in city centre venues, organised by UCC School of History. The series will begin in Waterstones, Patrick St, in April, and will continue with two lectures in the City Library in May, and conclude with two lectures in the City Library in June.

www.corkcity.ie

Community led events

Several local history groups, societies and local community groups will be bringing their local histories to life throughout the year.

www.corkcity.ie





Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Cuimhneachán
Commemoration
1920-1923
Corcaigh I Cork



LIBRARIES
LEABHARLANNA

CORK CITY COUNCIL | COMHAIRLE CATHRACH CHORCAÍ

CORK PUBLIC MUSEUM
MUSEAM POIBlí CHORCAÍ • CORK CITY COUNCIL



Cover Photo by Darren Coffey | Design by Sloane Graphic Design



An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreacht agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht