

editor's note

We open this latest issue of the *ALJ* with a tribute to Trevor Fawcett, the main driver behind the establishment of ARLIS/UK & Ireland back in 1969. His efforts are a poignant reminder of the ongoing need for an independent organization representing art, design and architectural libraries and archives within the profession.

One of the vital functions the Society undertakes is to organize the annual conference, the main opportunity for members of the profession to share best-practice and network, and the issue features a few papers from the successful ARLIS/UK & Ireland conference in summer 2017. About 100 delegates from the UK, Ireland and abroad converged on Dublin and were treated to some splendid institutional hospitality, interesting papers, and a few things new to ARLIS conferences, like lightning talks and hotel accommodation. On more than one occasion I heard delegates proclaim that it was such a wonderful conference, and the organizers should be congratulated for all their efforts.

The selection of papers was vast, although some had already been published in volume 42, issue 2, the special issue on information literacy. And so I made the decision to feature the Irish art papers presented on the final day of the conference. John Turpin gives an overview of resources in his very personal experience as an academic researching Irish art. Donna Romano explains how the National Irish Visual Arts Library has approached documenting Irish art in creating an archive for and by artists, researchers and the general public, which goes some way to ensure that some of the gaps Turpin identified in his paper are not repeated for the future. The Chester Beatty Library, a collection that appears unrelated to Ireland aside from its premises, contributes insights and beautiful objects to the changing Ireland with its immigrant populations and widening cultural diversity in Fionnuala Croke's paper.

A further 2 papers from the conference are unrelated to Ireland, but complement the other submissions for this issue. Daniel Payne's and Chris Jones's papers demonstrate how their libraries, one in Canada the other in the UK, are breaking down the narrow perceptions of the role of the library in academic support through engaging the students directly with their artistic practice. This theme is further discussed when Rebecca Daniel presents the findings of her MA project with first-year students at the University of the Creative Arts. And finally, Richard Lombard and Amy Andres give insight into collecting for the materials library at Virginia Commonwealth University of the Arts in Qatar.

The variety of papers and subjects covered demonstrates just how correct Trevor Fawcett was in his assertion that art libraries need an organization to represent their interests and eccentricities and that fosters national and international co-operation and collaboration.

Erica Foden-Lenahan