

The publication was launched by Canon Bertie Troy, Cloyne diocesan vicar of his time at the Irish College in the years before World War II by

that the religion would die out. Students were smuggled out of the

During Canon Corkery's time there the rector was Fr Travers, who stayed on at the college for the dura-

there as a student in France. "Those pre-war years were

Hunt director welcomes new review group

By COLM WARD

A REVIEW group has been appointed to oversee the investigation into the provenance of the works of art in the Hunt Museum in the wake of allegations that the collection may contain works looted by the Nazis.

The group will oversee the work of museum staff in examining in detail the origin of each piece in the museum.

It will be chaired by Sean Cromien, former secretary of the Department of Finance, and includes Michael Ryan, president of the Royal Irish Academy and director of the Chester Beatty Library; Dr Anne Kelly, director of Arts Administration Studies at UCD; Nancy H Yeide, Head of Curatorial Records at the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; and Helen Wechsler, director of the International and Ethics Program of the American Museums Association.

Ms Yeide has been engaged since 1997 in provenance research into the Gallery's collection, while Ms Wechsler is an expert on art transferred in Europe during the Nazi era.

The director of the Hunt Museum, Virginia Teehan, welcomed the commission's appointment.

"The Cromien Commission will work within clearly defined terms of reference and with a strict timeframe, under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy. Principles guiding their work will be the adherence to international standards of best practice, efficiency and value for money," she said.

The Provenance Research Project will be carried out in the museum and aims to formally examine the museum's catalogue and pursue further research in an effort to confirm the museum's good title to particular objects in the collection.



Hunt Museum director Virginia Teehan: past 12 months not easy for the staff and all those associated with the museum (LL)

The processes are the same as those followed by many museums which contain objects of international origin; many of the leading US museums are engaged in the same professional processes.

Consistent with these practices, the outcome of the project will be posted on the museum's website.

"The advantages of using this medium include widespread ease of accessibility and the greatest opportunity in reaching parties which may be able to add to the provenance information already held. Information gathered in this manner will also assist the museum to complete its documentation," said Ms Teehan.

"We started the Provenance Research Project in 2004, and considerable work has been done by a dedicated team working exclusively on this project within the museum.

"I'm particularly lucky in that the expertise lies within the museum to engage in this work and I am certain that the outcome will be of great benefit to the organisation," she said.

While praising the "excellent work" done by the Gort Furniture Trust in obtaining information about the origin of certain objects in Bunratty Castle, she pointed out that the process being undertaken at the Hunt was different. "While the referral of the list of objects to an agency which compiles databases of objects which have been reported as being looted by the Nazis could form part of an overall

provenance research project, it would not in any way fulfil the requirements set down by professional museum organisations at international level," she said.

There is a requirement on the museum to establish as much information as possible about the background to individual objects in the collection. A full catalogue with a picture of each object and information on its provenance will be on the website by 2006.

The controversy erupted in January 2004 when Dr Shimon Samuels of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre sent a letter to President Mary McAleese which contained allegations about business activities and associates of John and Gertrude Hunt and about the provenance of the Hunt Collection. There was no reference to any specific object in the collection and no evidence was presented to support the allegations.

Following this, the Minister for Arts, Sport, and Tourism, John O'Donoghue, ordered the museum to take action to satisfy itself in regard to the allegation made in the letter in so far as they relate to the collections.

Arising from this request, the museum board set up an independent commission headed up by Mr Justice Donal Barrington which recommended to the Minister that the review process should be overseen and funded by an independent agency to ensure its integrity.

The Barrington commission has now stepped

down following the appointment by the Minister of the new commission.

Ms Teehan admitted that the past 12 months had not been easy for the staff and all those associated with the museum, not only because of the allegations but also because of the death of John Hunt during the year.

"Of course, this has been a very difficult time for all of us: the board, the staff, who have been extraordinarily resilient in the fact of very tough times over the past year, the docents (volunteers), the friends and all those associated with the museum.

"But it is very important that I refer to the great support that he have received from the people of Limerick and the Mid-West," she said.

A tangible example of this support was the sponsorship from the business community locally. For example, the cost of curating last summer's highly successful Yeats exhibition was over €65,000, all of which was raised in sponsorship. The success of this exhibition increased visitor numbers by 15 per cent.

This summer the museum will stage an exhibition of works by leading Irish artists, including Lavery, Leech and Orpen. Entitled Summer Days, it will feature works from private collections, some of which have never been exhibited before.

"Again, we are looking for sponsorship and will be working to achieve a similar target as with Yeats. For all of us at the museum, but particularly the staff, that is what makes what has been a difficult year worthwhile—that what we do is valued and supported locally and indeed meeting the needs of the city and region," she said.

This year, the exhibition will run into the middle of October to facilitate school visits. Such was the interest from schools in the Yeats exhibition that the museum opened at 8.30am last year.

Cllr Eddie Wade, Cathaoirleach, Limerick County Council, makes a presentation to Claire Conaghan, Sean Liston, and Aine Mulcahy, Desmond College, Newcastle West this year's Limerick winners

Young scientists are

By DEIRDRE McGRATH

COUNTY Limerick VEC students basked in the glory of their incredible achievements at the Esat BT Young Scientist Competition when they were honoured at a civic reception in County Hall this week.

The students, from three different schools in the county, brought exceptional glory to Limerick in the competition which took place January.

Patrick Collison from Castletroy College won the ESAT BT Young Scientist of the Year title for designing a new programming language in his project entitled CROMA: a new dialect of LISP.

Patrick was entered in the technology category, intermediate section, and the judging panel described his project as "imaginative and significant."

The judges commented that "this project has designed a new programming language, CROMA, which is an enhancement of LISP, originally developed 50 years ago. It is a powerful, general purpose language for Web programming."

Patrick will represent Ireland at the European Union Contest for Young Scientists in Moscow in September.

The Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council, Cllr Eddie Wade



Hazelwood College, Dromcollogher, pupils Mary Ennis and teacher Maria Neville



Cllr Eddie Wade makes a presentation to Esat BT Young winner Patrick Collison from Castletroy College

congratulated Patrick on his success.

"On behalf of the people of County Limerick, I want to congratulate Patrick, who is only 16 years of age and a fourth-year student," he said.

"He has brought great honour to this county, his family and everyone in Castletroy College. The principal and staff, particularly his project teacher, Lisa Kiely, can be justly proud of his marvellous success," said