

This can be challenging particularly if someone doesn't have a monthly budget in place. No matter what anyone says about the benefits of having one, it's something they are unlikely to set up, or, if they do, follow. It can get overwhelming trying to figure out

The premise is simple, your net monthly income should be split into three separate groupings with a percentage devoted to each. They were: 50% to the must haves which included things like your mortgage, rent, utilities, groceries, in-

€700 should be going towards savings and pension contributions. The percentages Ms Warren puts forward are guideline only and can be adjusted, depending on your situation. If your 'must have' payments account for more than 50% of your

the individual or family. One thing I would caution you against is your immediate reaction to the percentages suggested. For example, don't immediately rule out 20%

wellbeing, so it might be worth a try. Liam Croke is MD of Harmonics Financial Ltd, based in Plassey. He can be contacted at liam@harmonics.ie or www.harmonics.ie

■The untold story of Richard Hayes and a revealing account of a fascinating period of Irish history

WWII code-breaker from Abbeyfeale is an 'Irish hero'

NORMA PRENDIVILLE
E: normap@limerickleader.ie

THIS is a story of many characters, but chief among them is a humble librarian from west Limerick, whose efforts alongside his colleagues in Irish Military Intelligence, helped turn the tide of the Second World War.

With these dramatic and arresting words, Marc McMenamin opens the untold story of Richard Hayes, mathematician, polyglot, Director of the National Library, Ireland's foremost Nazi code-breaker and an Abbeyfeale man.

It is a book that delivers on what is says on the cover: a riveting and deeply researched account of an extraordinary period of history, opening up a period about which many people know little.

Marc McMenamin's introduction to the story came by chance. A colleague spotted a Dublin house for sale in the property pages, known locally as the Nazi house and said to Marc: There's a story in that.

That began a long period of research for Marc, a history teacher, researcher and documentary maker. "I had no idea of the extent of German espionage in Ireland," Marc explained following the launch of his book this week. "It was amazing to see what was going on... What I had been taught was that Ireland was neutral and we stayed out of the war. There were rations and butter vouchers and that is it, nothing like this at all."

The "this" ended up, first as a radio documentary on RTE 1 and now as a book which tells the story of how Richard Hayes, the smart young lad from Abbeyfeale, turned out to be a crack



Dr Hayes in his day job as director of the National Library

codebreaker.

The Abbeyfeale connection ran deep, according to Marc Richard's father, Richard Senior was a bank manager in the town but his grandfather Ambrose was also from Abbeyfeale. The family moved to Clarendon when Richard was still young but family life but his father died when he was 18 and his brother Ambrose disappeared.

However, young Richard was clever, excelling at Clongowes, pursuing three degree courses at the same time and becoming fluent in several languages including

German. He got a post in the National Library and was later to become its national director.

How he first became connected with Military Intelligence remains a mystery Marc explained, but when WWII began he was headhunted for G2, the Irish Military Intelligence section. His aim, because of his mathematical prowess, was to break the codes so that the messages passed on to or back from Germany could be understood.

Ireland was important to Germany as a source of information about Britain,



Marc McMenamin with John Bowman who launched the book

about weather and possibly as a launch-pad for an attack on Britain itself, Marc pointed out. Ireland was also important to Britain, precisely to prevent any of these things happening.

The book itself traces the short-lived careers of quite a few German spies arriving in Ireland by various means, including parachutes and also deals with the political and diplomatic context in which this happens.

But Marc makes the case that Hayes was responsible for three major and significant breakthroughs.

The first centred around a spy called Schutz who arrived in Ireland armed with a special microdot code where innocuous messages contained secret messages hidden within dots on the page and which were visible only by being magnified. It was Hayes who spotted something amiss with a full-stop which led to this discovery.

The second major breakthrough concerned Herman Gortz who was dispatched to Ireland with one of the most sophisticated ciphers or codes in use by the Ger-

mans. At the time, there were 16 people working in Bletchley Park in England trying to break this code and they were having difficulty, Marc explained.

But Richard Hayes broke it and some of the measures he had to take to do so read like an old-fashioned spy thriller. Gathering up burnt pieces of paper and applying chemicals to them is as James Bond as you can get.

A third significant breakthrough involved the spy from Kilkee, John Francis O'Reilly who was trained as a spy in Germany and was parachuted into West Clare.

He brought with him a code-cipher wheel or device which Richard Hayes set about analysing and discovered that Germany had developed an entirely new system of carrying out substitution and transposition ciphers, the keys to any code. This information was shared with British intelligence and was the break-through in decoding German messages in the build-up to the Battle of the Bulge. "Dr Hayes' discovery played a

crucial role in the Allied victory," Marc writes in the book.

In the book, Marc also deals in some detail with the life of John Francis O'Reilly which is so fantastical, it couldn't be made up as well as with the Republican links with Germany.

"At the end of the war, Hayes was described as a colossus whose gifts amount to genius," Marc told the Limerick Leader. But he added: "He has almost written himself out of history." Richard Hayes rarely if ever spoke about his work, he pointed out. "It was the ethos of the time... you just didn't talk about it."

He described Richard Hayes as very discreet, a man with a very dry sense of humour who loved peace and quiet. "He loved learning and would hate anything to get the better of him," he continued. In the best sense, he was a practical public servant, a man with a huge sense of duty, who didn't seek fame and didn't like a fuss or a crowd."

But Marc added, he would have wanted things to be on the historical record.

"I would have loved to talk to him," he said. "It is a great shame nobody took the time to do that."

"I would like for people to see him for the hero he was. We all need heroes, especially Irish heroes and he was a great Irish hero. He is a hero for Abbeyfeale, for West Limerick, for all of us."

Code Breaker, by Marc McMenamin is published by Gill Books, ISBN 9780717181612 at €16.99. The author will give a lecture on Richard Hayes in the Granary Library on November 13.

Calls for 'Wild Atlantic Way for Education'

JESS CASEY
E: jess.casey@limerickleader.ie

FOLLOWING a successful national conference hosted by Mary Immaculate College, the Director of the Teaching Council has called for the development of a 'Wild Atlantic Way for Education.'

Tomás Ó Ruairc believes FÉILTE, the Teaching Council's annual festival celebrating the work of teachers, was a "great success" in Limerick when it was hosted here at the beginning of October, the first time the festival was staged outside of Dublin.

"FÉILTE clearly shows the magic that can happen when we create the space for teachers, students and parents to share and celebrate teaching and learning," Mr Ó Ruairc said.

The festival highlights "that parents and students are keen to talk about teaching and learning."

"Yet they don't have the opportunities to have those conversations in their own school communities," he said, adding that this is despite the fact that Ireland has no shortage of schools, higher education institutes

or creative spaces.

"We need to join the dots in some way. We need to make it easier for people to find the spaces to have the conversations in times and places that suit them, no matter who they are or where they are."

"In short, we need a Wild Atlantic Way for Education; a roadmap of places where people can talk and people can learn and help each other to talk more and learn better," Mr Ó Ruairc said.

This project would give teachers the chance to continue to access professional learning opportunities, while having conversations about what they have learned, he explained.

Parents and students would also have opportunities to explore what they want to get from learning and teaching. "Teachers and students would have more confidence and scope to innovate in teaching and learning. They would have more space to be as creative as they wished. Teachers would have more space to exercise their professional judgement in the interests of students' learning, all within a robust yet flexible policy framework at a national level."



Director of the Teaching Council Tomás Ó Ruairc