



PRESS RELEASE * COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Monaco, 22th January 2024

40th year celebration at the Princess Grace Irish Library

As one of the Principality's cultural gems, the Princess Grace Irish Library is delighted to announce the theme for its programme of events, to celebrate 40 years.

'A retrospective of Princess Grace, her Irish origins and passion for Irish culture'

The library in Monaco marks the 40th anniversary of its inauguration in 1984, two years after the death of Princess Grace. As the Principality nears the end of the centenary celebrations for her husband, Prince Rainier III, it is fitting to celebrate his contribution to the promotion of Irish culture and literature, by creating the library in homage to his late wife's attachment to Ireland.

The celebrations will have a focus on the "triangle" of countries, Ireland-USA-Monaco, so close to Princess Grace's heart. The library's events will explore the mark made by Irish writers, musicians and other prominent figures, including Princess Grace's own father, Jack Kelly, born in Philadelphia to Mary Ann Costello and John Henry Kelly, both of whom emigrated from Ireland in 1867.

Music will also feature prominently this year. A selection of music from the Princess Grace collection will be performed by pupils as a continuation of the library's collaboration with the conservatoires in Monaco (L'Académie Rainier III) and Ireland (Technological University Dublin).

A key part of the library's mission is to provide a place and the research resources to writers and academics to work on their projects. In that vein, we are delighted to announce the recipient of the spring 2024 bursary, generously supported by The Ireland Funds Monaco. Flor MacCarthy is a celebrated author, journalist and former RTÉ TV presenter who will spend the month of March as Writer-in-Residence. Flor is author of 'The Presidents' Letters – An unexpected History of Ireland', which includes a letter from Princess Grace, following the family's first visit to Ireland in 1961, as part of the first Head of State visit by Prince Rainier III.

A special commemorative stamp will be revealed later in the year by the Office des Émissions de Timbres-Poste.

All the events and library partnerships will highlight Princess Grace's legacy and strengthen the cultural ties between Monaco, Ireland and America.

Save-the-dates

- **January 24th** at 7pm: A lecture by author Patrick O'Sullivan Greene on the theme 'Revolution to Royalty - The making of an Irish-American Princess'. <https://www.pgil.mc/lectures/lecture-by-author-patrick-o-sullivan-greene>
- **February 21st** at 7pm: A multimedia presentation by author Neal Doherty on county Mayo, exploring its history and heritage, including the Kelly ancestral home, <https://www.pgil.mc/lectures/a-talk-by-author-neal-doherty-1>
- **March 13th**: An illustrated talk by Flor MacCarthy 'The Princess and the Presidents of Ireland' on the relationship between HSH Prince Albert II's Family and successive Irish presidents as seen through their correspondence. Based on her bestselling book *The Presidents' Letters: An Unexpected History of Ireland* <https://www.pgil.mc/lectures/a-talk-by-author-flor-maccarthy>
- More events for spring 2024 in Monaco: <https://www.pgil.mc/lectures/current>

Editor's Notes:

About the Princess Grace Irish Library

A centre of literary excellence since 1984 and home to the beautiful, rare books and Irish American music scores that the Princess collected over her lifetime, the library has become an important centre of Irish culture, widely respected for its contribution to global Irish studies. The calibre and variety of the writers-in-residence, speakers and traditional Irish musicians ensures something of interest for all.

The library was inaugurated on 20th November 1984 by Prince Rainier III of Monaco as a tribute to his wife Princess Grace and the attachment she felt for her Irish origins.

In March 2023, H.S.H. Prince Albert II unveiled a sculpture of His mother Princess Grace in Newport, county Mayo, close to where the Kelly homestead stood.

People of Irish descent have emigrated and contributed to the United States for centuries – particularly from the 19th century due to the devastating effects of the famine in Ireland. Grace Kelly's own grandfather John Kelly (1847 -1897) was born in county Mayo and aged 20, set sail aboard the 'SS City of Boston' to America. The Kelly's became one of the most prominent families in Philadelphia and direct descendants still live in the area today.

The Princess Grace Irish Library launched its catalogue of books and music scores online – the search bar can be found on the website homepage. The listing of over 500 Irish books and more than 1,000 unique Irish American music sheets (which span from 1840 to the mid-1900s) from Princess Grace's personal collection can be found. The library is also home to precious art works and photos of visits to Ireland by the Prince's family since 1961 to today.

The library is under the ægis of the *Fondation Princesse Grace* with President H.R.H. Princess of Hanover and H.S.H. Prince Albert II as Vice-President, respectively the daughter and son of the late Princess Grace (née Grace Kelly).

www.pgil.mc

About The Ireland Funds Monaco



The Ireland Funds Monaco generously funds the Bursary programme at the Library, of which Flor MacCarthy is the recipient in spring 2024.

The Ireland Funds Monaco Bursaries were established to enable literary and academic writers born or living on the island of Ireland to pursue a current project during a one-month residency at the *Princess Grace Irish Library* in Monaco. The Bursaries are aimed at writers who are currently engaged in a work-in-progress which would benefit in some regard from time spent working at the library and access to its collections.

The Ireland Funds Monaco is one of the chapters of The Ireland Funds, a global philanthropic network established in 1976 to promote and support peace, culture, education and community development throughout the island of Ireland, and Irish-related causes around the world. It has benefited the work of thousands of different organisations, with both financial and non-financial support. Today, The Ireland Funds is one of the largest private grant makers for the non-profit sector in Ireland.

www.irelandfunds.org

Photo caption: Recipient of the Ireland Funds Monaco spring bursary, author Flor MacCarthy

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