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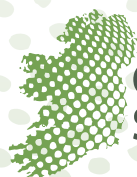
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'To further planting of trees': Arbor Day in 20th century Ireland

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Abstract: Arbor Day, historically devoted to tree planting, connected people with trees and left a legacy for future generations. Reports in local and national newspapers describe Arbor Days in 20th century Ireland. They were organised by The Irish Forestry Society, 1904-1923; the Department of Lands 1935-1939 and Trees for Ireland 1950-1984, two voluntary groups and a state sponsor, in co-operation with local authorities. While the aim was to promote afforestation, in time it fostered an interest in trees in rural and, more particularly, in urban communities, what is now known as urban forestry. Arbor Days followed a similar format with speeches by local politicians and clergy referencing the social, sometimes nationalistic role of trees, followed by tree planting by them and young people. The inculcation of a life-long interest in trees in young people was obvious in each period. Planting in school or college grounds, though evident throughout the periods under consideration, was most pronounced from 1935-1939. In the period 1952-1984, the sites selected in Dublin were located in developing suburbs or large public housing schemes. Arbor Day was adopted by local community groups who also organised tree planting. Arbor Day in Ireland mirrored Arbor Day in the US and Australia. There is little evidence to suggest that Arbor Day furthered afforestation. However, it was a valuable environmental and educational initiative in periods of political and economic change in 20th century Ireland. Arbor Day foreshadowed environmental initiatives current in 21st century Ireland and worldwide.

Keywords: *Arbor Day, urban forestry, tree planting, urban parks and open spaces, trees and education*

Introduction

Arbor Day, a day devoted to tree planting, connected people with trees and left a legacy for future generations. This paper examines the evolution of Arbor Day in the US, Australia and England and compares it with the record of Arbor Day in Ireland. Secondly, it follows attitudes to environmental education and sustainability implicit in Arbor Day and explores its relevance as a model for environmental initiatives in rural and urban communities. In 20th century Ireland, Arbor Day was organised by: The Irish Forestry

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Society, 1904-1923; The Department of Lands, 1935-1939, and Trees for Ireland, 1952-1984. Drawing on reports in contemporary newspapers and periodicals, this paper draws together an account of Arbor Day in Ireland for the first time. It traces the background to Arbor Day and its early international development, before examining its Irish expression in Ireland in the 20th century. The paper closes with a review of emerging themes.

The Roots of Arbor Day

Trees, woods and forests have played a role in the development of human settlements from villages to cities, as indicated in place names in Ireland, e.g., Youghal (*Eochoill* – yew wood) or Kildare (*Cill Dara* – church oak) and the association of Bois de Boulogne and Vienna Woods with Paris and Vienna respectively. While Central and Nordic European cities appreciated the benefits of woodlands, in North-western and Southern cities surrounding forests were cleared to allow for urbanisation, construction, fuel and industry (Konijnendijk, 2008). Trees also had and have a significance in world religions, e.g., sacred groves and trees; in myths, e.g., Robin Hood, and in rituals, e.g., May Day celebrations (Konijnendijk, 2008). Trees have a cultural significance. 'The cultivation of trees is the cultivation of the good, the beautiful and the ennobling of man', so wrote J. S. Morton, in the *Omaha Daily News* (Jones, 2010). Comments about the broader environment were expressed by the lives of Thoreau and Muir, contemporaries of Morton. The author, David Thoreau (1817-1862), was a naturalist and a pioneer ecologist (Anon, 2009). The work of John Muir (1838-1914), naturalist, conservationist and writer, resulted in the establishment of several national parks in the United States (Dean, 2004). While Muir had a great knowledge of trees, Morton advocated their cultivation.

Arbor Day in the United States, Australia and England

Julius Sterling Morton (1832-1902) settled on the banks of the Missouri river, near the present city of Nebraska, USA, in 1865. He established a newspaper, became involved in politics as a Democrat and promoted tree planting for both commercial and aesthetic purposes (Anderson, 2000). While serving on the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, he proposed an 'Arbor Day' to promote the importance of tree planting. The first Arbor Day occurred on 10th April 1872, in the city of Nebraska. In 1883, B. G. Northrup of the American Forestry Association proposed that Arbor Day be observed in schools (Anderson, 2000). By 1892, schools in some 40 states and territories in the USA observed it on Morton's birthday 22nd April (Jones, 2010). Morton's initiative achieved substantial spatial diffusion in twenty years. Initially, it was associated with schools, where through the information imparted at tree planting ceremonies, pupils became aware of deforestation and the implications of a lack of timber for fuel, construction and paper. Through Arbor Day, an attitude of conservation and preservation was being instilled in young Americans. According to Jones (2010), 'Arbor Day was a catalyst for the formation of the American Forestry Association in 1875 and spurred the development of the US Forest Service'. In the early 20th century, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department

of Public Instruction issued booklets for use in schools on what was designated Arbor Day and Bird Day – 27th October (Klinek, 2010). In time, Arbor Day was linked with Village Improvement and City Beautiful movements in which trees were planted in the home farm or parks and tree-lined streets developed (Schmidt, 1991). By 1949, five states had legislation enacting Arbor Day and by 1977, this had increased to 24 states (Jones, 2010). Arbor Day continues; in many states the last Friday in April is designated 'National Arbor Day' (adjusted in some states to accommodate prevailing climatic conditions) and is now one of many programmes of the Arbor Day Foundation (www.arborday.org).

In Australia, Arbor Day was first marked in Hahndorf, near Adelaide, in 1886. That year, the Minister for Education (Dr John Alexander Cockburn) sent a memorandum to schools proposing that 'a day be set aside in winter for tree planting, a purpose for which was to ... give a series of object lessons on forestry, which would be of lifelong value to the children and of ultimate benefit to the State'. At the instigation of the Central Agricultural Bureau, which comprised senior agricultural, horticultural and arboricultural officials, Arbor Day was held in Adelaide on 20th June 1889 at a site granted by the City Council. A Police Band and Mounted Police led 3,500 to 4,000 children and their school bands to the planting site where 757 'planting squads' planted 757 trees supplied by the Forest Department. The Governor, (Earl of Kintore) and his family each planted a tree. Then, the Governor, Mayor and Minister for Education addressed the children. Arbor Day was inaugurated in Queensland on 1st August 1890 with 368 schools participating and 5,453 trees planted; in Sydney, New South Wales, June 1890 and 1891 (601 schools); in state schools in Victoria (1890s) and in Western Australia in 1937. While the term has not been used for at least 50 years, the ethos of Arbor Day finds expression in current initiatives such as 'Greening Australia' and 'Land Care' (Jones, 2010).

Though Arbor Day was mentioned in British press and Government reports, Arbor Day in England was inaugurated by the Newcastle Tree Culture and Protection Society in November 1888 when Princess Louise planted a sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) at the Durham College of Science. In 1897, in Eynsford, Kent, Mr Elliot Downs Till planted a number of trees and shrubs in acrostic form to illustrate the proverb MY SON BE WISE (Hipperson, 2012). Till and Radcliffe Cooke M.P. emphasised that Arbor Day could educate 'planters of the future' and instil an interest in tree preservation and welfare. Their vision of afforestation was thwarted by Board of Agriculture policy and a 1903 Departmental Committee of Forestry recommendation, which did not support large acquisition of land by the State for afforestation (Hipperson, 2012). In contrast to America and Australia where local state authorities supported Arbor Day, in England the Society for the Protection of Birds, a voluntary organisation, established a 'Bird and Tree Day'. In an essay, Till outlined how such a day could be organised. Sir John Cockburn, who had initiated Arbor Day in Australia, supported the proposal at the Society's annual general meeting in 1902. The Society organised competitions for schoolchildren to study birds and trees, and awards were made at Arbor Day celebrations organised in conjunction with local education authorities, at which trees were planted. Held in rural areas, these events were seen by the Society as essential to community life (Hipperson, 2012). By

1907, educational and commercial benefits were promoted, children learned about 'the uses and properties of trees' and the 'benefit of forestry' and associated industries (Hipperson, 2012).

Tomorrow a Peaceful Path to Real Reform and *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, books by Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928) were instrumental in the development and design of Letchworth, the first Garden City, in Hertfordshire, England. The First Garden City Ltd was registered in 1902 and the company began making Howard's ideal city a reality. Reflecting land use and density zoning, Unwin, the designer of the new City, designated a town centre, commercial and residential areas (Miller, 1989). Tree-lined roads are clearly visible in 'The Company's Plan' of April 1904, which is illustrated in Miller (1989). The Garden City Estate planted 100,000 trees. An Arbor Day Committee, established by residents in 1907, organised tree planting ceremonies for the community with pageants and speeches in 1908, 1909, 1912 and 1913 (Hipperson, 2012). Howard himself attended the first; H. Rider Haggard, novelist and advocate of agriculture, the second, and Walter Crane, the Socialist artist, the third (Miller, 1989). These events could be viewed as 'living the dream' of life in a garden city.

World War 1 signalled the end of Arbor Day; 'the state appropriation of timber production' provided 'the death knell' (Hipperson, 2012). There was a belief that only the State had the necessary expertise for long-term, large-scale afforestation. The Forestry Commission was established in 1919 (Hipperson, 2012). In 1973 and 1974, the UK Government promoted nationwide tree planting with the slogans 'Plant a Tree in 73' and 'Plant some more in 74'. The Tree Council was formed in 1975 and continues to organise a Tree Week each November.

In a twenty-five-year period, Arbor Day gained significant momentum to become a global event organised by state agencies (US and Australia), residents' associations (Letchworth) and individual citizens (Till). In scale, Arbor Day varied from planting a few trees at Eynsford, Kent to 757 trees planted by children in Adelaide. The purpose was to promote forestry and associated industries, to inculcate regard for trees and nature in children and to foster community in new and existing towns. Underlying motives were 'social and economic concerns of the day' and in the UK where 'a loss of woodland would lead to a changed appearance and character of the countryside' (Hipperson, 2012). In England and the US, 'patriotism figured prominently in these civic spectacles' (Schmidt, 1991). Klinek (2010), a schoolboy Arbor Day participant, remarked that an 'educational mission is perhaps Arbor Day's most important legacy'. Other legacies such as 'environmentalism and conservationism remain concerns in present day US' and [worldwide] (Klinek, 2010). When linking the cultivation of trees with the ennoblement of the human person, Morton, the founder of Arbor Day, anticipated contemporary political ecology of urban forests and trees (Sandberg *et al.*, 2015).

This paper examines the reasons for and expressions of Arbor Day in 20th century Ireland. Who was involved and what were their motivations? Where did Arbor Days occur and did their form vary in Ireland? What was the legacy of Arbor Day and do the themes find expression in contemporary environmental initiatives? Did Arbor Days in Ireland reflect or differ from Arbor Days organised internationally?

Sources and Resources

The primary sources of information were reports in 60 national and local newspapers, available on-line at *Irish Newspaper Archives*. This involved a year-by-year trawl under the keyword 'Arbor Day' and where promising, related keywords were used. The national newspapers were *The Freeman's Journal*, *Irish Independent*, and *Irish Press* while the local newspapers included the *Southern Star*, *The Anglo-Celt* and *The Connacht Tribune*. A second on-line resource *The Irish Times 1859-2011* (ProQuest Historical Newspapers) was also searched. Periodicals of the early 20th century *Irish Gardening* and *Irish Life* also provided reports of the early period of Arbor Day. National Archives, Department of Agriculture and Arbor Day Foundation websites also provided information. Press reports varied from lengthy articles to brief reports, notices and letters advising readers about Arbor Day. In the 1970s, photographs rather than written reports were more common.

Phase I Arbor Day – The Irish Forestry Society, 1904–1923

Prompted by an article written by Mr E. D. Till, Ainsford, [Eynsford] Kent in *Pearson's Magazine* in February 1901, the Irish Forestry Society (IFS) was founded in 1901 to encourage tree planting and preserve standing timber (Anon, 1908). Coincidentally, the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland (DATI) operated from 1900. To promote their aims, the IFS issued publicity material, wrote to the newspapers and organised Arbor Day planting ceremonies. The inaugural Arbor Day in Ireland, held on November 1st 1904, was a low-key event, where Mr Charles Dawson, Chairman of the IFS planted a sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) tree at the Spa Hotel, Lucan, and Dublin. In his address, he spoke of the advantage of growing timber – of the £25 million worth of imported timber, £18 million could be grown in these islands (Anon, 1904). A month later a prestigious tree planting ceremony took place in the Phoenix Park, Dublin. In an area between the Wellington Monument and the [Civil Service] cricket ground, six sycamore trees were planted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Lord Castletown of Upper Ossory, President, IFS; Mr O. H. Bradell, Treasurer; Mr Edward Martyn, playwright and founder of the Abbey Theatre; Mr Wm. Field, M.P., who was also associated with the Vacant Plot and Allotment Movement; and the aforementioned Mr E. Till.

At a meeting that followed the ceremony, comments by significant individuals captured recurring themes mentioned at Arbor Day events, namely the potential for and support of afforestation by the State. The Lord Mayor hoped that this would be 'the beginning of a great movement to have vast tracts of land planted' with trees and labour supplied by the Government (Anon, 1904a). Lord Castletown, a timber importer, commented that 'The Irish climate was capable of making the best trees grow and producing the finest timber' (1904a). Mr Frederick Moore, Director, Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, said that 'there were flourishing plantations in County Dublin and that what was being undertaken on the day was not a fad' (1904a). Mr Field hoped that County Councils would promote tree planting. Mr T. P. Gill, Secretary of the DATI stressed that it was also a popular movement

– honouring notable people and events with the support of both the IFS and the Gaelic League. Tree planting was considered a national duty. He continued to state that the availability of suitable land for forestry and the inability of a local authority to protect existing woodland, were obstacles which should have been removed by the Land Act 1903 (Anon, 1904a). How this might have operated in practice is unclear as forestry and local authorities are not mentioned in this Act. Helen Scott-Kerr (1904), an attendee, noted that together with timber production, industries such as toy manufacture, matches, and walking sticks could provide employment for women, young men and girls and ‘stem the fast-flowing stream of emigration’.

In a reference to the Irish Land Act 1903 (enabling tenants to purchase farmland), the Earl of Ranfurly, a landowner in Co. Tyrone, expressed a concern which he did not accept that ‘with farmers becoming owners of the soil’ trees would be felled and the country would become bare and desolate (Anon, 1905). He was speaking at the inauguration of Arbor Day at the Dungannon Workhouse on 17th March 1905 where ornamental trees, namely variegated sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* ‘Variegata’), chestnuts (*Aesculus*) and lime (*Tilia*) were planted (Anon, 1905). Such a selection of trees would have been associated with demesne landscapes, as owned by the Earl at Northland House, Dungannon. Ornamental planting of workhouse grounds would have been unusual but, as the newspaper reported, it was an example of a new movement to re-afforest ‘the North of Ireland’ (Anon, 1905).

Letters of apology from Lord Ardilaun and The Earl of Drogheda to the IFS annual general meeting in 1907 condemned deforestation by a government department [Congested Districts Board] which had purchased estates, and by land purchasing tenants (Anon, 1907). The Chairman stated that the Society was trying to persuade the Government, the Treasury and the DATI to adopt afforestation, a benefit to the State. He emphasised that Arbor Day had become an ‘established fact’. The meeting proposed the establishment of a Forestry department (Anon, 1907).

Archibold E. Moeran (1908), Portumna, Co. Galway, praised Arbor Day in *Irish Gardening*. He emphasised that while Arbor Day might directly result in the planting of small groups of trees along roadsides or around buildings in towns, the custom of tree planting on Arbor Day would advance afforestation and benefit the country. Arbor Day planting had the effect of sheltering houses, and transforming ‘bedraggled streets’ of towns and villages into ‘leafy boulevards’. As well as encouraging schools to organise tree planting ceremonies, where children could plant trees and learn about forestry, Moeran recommended that county, urban and district councils and private individuals should plant trees. Trees were seen as symbols of the landed gentry and their estates rather than an essential element of land management (Healy, 1980) but according to Moeran (1908), such events would promote forestry and overcome the apathy and hostility to trees that existed in the country.

In an ‘Appeal to the Country’ the IFS acknowledged that planting undertaken on Arbor Day could not be regarded as ‘real afforestation’. However, planting on a specific day would attract Government attention, leading to replanting. It noted that in the United

States, Arbor Day resulted in State tree planting (Anon, 1908). The transformation of unsightly areas in town and country resulted in areas 'pleasing to the eye and most conducive to health' (Anon, 1908). In 1908, the IFS distributed 8,000-9,000 young trees for planting together with those sent to 300 National School teachers (Anon, 1908b).

Nurserymen were supportive of the initiative, e.g., Mr Alex Dickson, 50 Essex Street, and the Nurseries, Dundrum, Dublin, offered 6,000 trees free of charge, to be planted by schoolchildren (Anon, 1908a). Sir J. W. Mackey, a Dublin nurseryman, supplied 60 trees for a new school at Dromintee, Newry, Co. Down, where Canon Smyth P.P. planted the first tree (Anon, 1908f). In that year, planting ceremonies were organised in locations throughout the country. In Mayobridge, Co. Down, a local committee purchased 5,000 forest trees and 500 apple trees. In February 1908, children marched through the village and were presented with the trees on *Arbour* (sic) Day (Anon, 1908c). In November 1908, Arbor Day was celebrated at the Sloblands, Fairview (now Fairview Park), Dublin. Trees named for six cities, Dublin, Belfast, Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Derry were planted by the Lord Mayor and others. Tree planting events occurred at Doneraile, by Lord Castletown; Dominican Convent, Sion Hill, Blackrock; Sandycove; Dun Laoghaire; and Portumna, Co. Galway, where Mr A. E. Moeran demonstrated tree planting (Anon, 1908d). In Limerick city, the Mayor and Councillors planted lime trees presented by Mr Griffin, Ballicurra Nursery, at Island Bank, Arthur's Quay and Sir Harry's Mall (Anon, 1908e).

A gala event was held in Harold's School, Dalkey, Co. Dublin, in November 1908. Those present included local clergy, members of the Urban District Council, Town Clerk, Town Engineer and children who sang 'Let us go the Hedgerows'. Canon Murray expressed his appreciation of the work done by Mr Humphreys, how the schoolboys had 'taken to the work' and continued that 'knowledge of gardening and arboriculture was most useful for the country'. Mr Michael Judd JP MCC, stated that in the past year the United Kingdom (including Ireland) had imported £45 million worth of timber, £18 million of which he claimed could have been grown in Ireland and planting of trees for timber which 'would keep money at home'. In speaking about the benefits of planting, Mr Humphreys, an organiser in rural science and school gardening with the DATI (Forrest and Ingram, 2003), said that 'in school it induced boys to take an interest in trees, which would be of great interest to them in later life' and that 'the school was the place to learn how to keep their homes beautiful both inside and outside'. Trees were planted by Mr Judd, Canon Murray, and schoolboys. The proceedings ended in song with 'Let Erin Remember' (Anon, 1908g). This event expressed the many themes and motives implicit in Arbor Day, inculcating an interest in trees in youth, disseminating information about forestry, promoting indigenous industry, developing practical skills in tree planting and (what today would be known as) landscaping. These same themes and motives found expression in earlier Arbor Days in Australia and the US.

In 1909, at Ring College (Coláiste na Rinne) Co. Waterford, where education was through the medium of Irish, the authorities chose 'Arbor Day' to plant the school grounds and also to demonstrate support for re-afforestation of the country. Trees and

shrubs were provided by nurseries in the Munster region, Messrs R. Fennessy and Son, Waterford; P. Griffin, Limerick; M. Saunders and Sons, Cork and C. Lee, Tipperary. Advice and supervision of planting was provided by Mr Hudson, Co. Waterford Horticultural Instructor, the IFS and the DATI (Anon, 1909). On 6th November, an Arbor Day tree planting ceremony organised by the IFS and Bray Urban District Council took place on the Esplanade, Bray, Co. Wicklow. The Lord Lieutenant and Lady Aberdeen, A. Meldon R.M.; J. Scott Kerr and Charles Dawson (IFS), Mr Wm. Field, M.P.; J. Howard Parnell; Mr James Magee, Chairman of Bray U.D.C. and Mrs West planted nine of fourteen trees planted that day (Anon, 1909a). In Co. Galway, following the planting in 1908, 30 trees including elm (*Ulmus*), lime and chestnut, gifts of Messrs Power and Co. nurserymen of Waterford, were planted in Portumna on 8th November (Anon, 1909b).

In 1910, the IFS issued a manifesto entitled 'Arbor Day'. This argued that people planting trees would draw the Government's attention to tree planting and claimed that the scheme had been a success in 1909, with 'thousands of trees being planted', a claim unsubstantiated in newspaper reports. The manifesto suggested locations for tree planting as follows: corporations to plant principal streets, or waste land, school grounds and playgrounds, cemeteries and burial grounds, , surroundings of churches, hospitals, workhouses, factories, creameries and individuals to plant around their houses. Tree planting could also mark anniversaries of notable events. (Anon, 1910). Despite IFS advocacy of Arbor Day, no newspaper reports of events between 1910 and 1915 were located.

In November 1916, reports of the IFS Arbor Day event were published in a national newspaper and social and horticultural periodicals. Mr T. P. Gill of the DATI presided at 'an interesting gathering' of 200 people, many of whom were associated with forestry, horticulture and education in Ireland, examples being Prof Augustine Henry, Professor of Forestry, Royal College of Science; Edward Knowlton, IFS and Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland; and Miss H. M. White, Lady Principal of Alexandra College, Dublin (Anon, 1916). In outlining the aims of the IFS, Gill (Figure 1) commented that 'millions of trees could be growing if one person planted one every Arbor Day' (Anon, 1916a). Two trees of a hybrid Poplar (*Populus x generosa*), bred by Henry, were planted by T. P. Gill and by Mrs T. W. Russell, wife of the Vice-President of the DATI. Eighteen standard apple trees, which had been supplied by six named nurseries, were planted by individuals named in a report in *Irish Gardening*. The work was facilitated by 20 students (Anon, 1916b) from the recently established Irish School of Gardening for Women, Meaneen, Terenure, Dublin (Forrest and Ingram, 1999) (Figure 2). In that same month, the Roscommon Guardians inaugurated Arbor Day to develop and encourage re-forestation in and around Roscommon. To this end, an Irish Yew (*Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata') was planted in the Roscommon workhouse grounds by Mr T. A. P. Mapother (Anon, 1916a). Planting of grounds of workhouses had been mentioned in the IFS manifesto (Anon, 1908).

In 1919, Mr T. P. Gill and others assembled at Harold's Cross Park, Dublin, to mark Arbor Day, courtesy of the Rathmines and Rathgar Urban District Council. A total of nine birch (*Betula*) and copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*) trees were planted by nine



Figure 1. T.P. Gill and colleagues, from *Irish Life*, November 10th 1916.

Images Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland



Figure 2A. Arbor Day at Meanee, from *Irish Life*, November 10th 1916.

Images Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland



Figure 2B. Arbor Day at Meanee, from *Irish Life*, November 10th 1916.

Images Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

named individuals. The trees had been supplied by Messrs Pennick and Co. Delgany, Co. Wicklow and Messrs Alex Dickson, Dublin (Anon, 1917). Mr G. Metcalfe J.P. of the Council said that due to scarcity of imported timber much timber had been felled in the previous two years. The Council had an interest in trees, evident in Harold's Cross Park and Palmerstown Park. Over the preceding 30 years to 1917, it had planted 80,000 trees at Bohernabreena, Co. Dublin, and was harvesting these trees for fencing timber in their district (Anon, 1917). In Newry, Co. Down, copper beech and Canadian thorn (*Crataegus*) trees were planted on Kildare Street and Trevor Hill (Anon, 1917b).

While the IFS promoted Arbor Day there was some support for tree planting from the State. This is indicated by a comment about the Arbor Day celebration at Meanee referred to above: 'The Dept. of Agriculture and County Committees of Agriculture will supply trees at a nominal cost to small holders' (Anon, 1916a). Prof Henry also informed a meeting of the IFS that the National Board of Education would promote Arbor Day among schoolchildren (Anon, 1917a). In response to a Parliamentary question from Mr Wm. Field M.P., the Chief Secretary stated that 'There is no power to enforce the celebration of an annual Arbor Day, but the Dept. [DATI] had given assistance and support to the voluntary efforts in that direction' (Anon, 1918).

The Gaelic League and afforestation

Increasing nationalism was evident in the late 19th century, when the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) promoted hurling and Gaelic football, and the Gaelic League fostered the Irish language and literature. On the first Irish Arbor Day in 1904, Mr T. P. Gill stated that the Gaelic League would support tree planting as national duty (Anon, 1904a). In 1905, speaking about 'One Remedy for Emigration' at a Catholic Truth Conference, Mr

Charles Dawson said ‘with regard to Arbor Day the *Coisde Gnotha* of the Gaelic League, on February 9th last came to the conclusion that *Samhain* would be the most suitable time; the 31st of October to be called *La na gCrann* (Arbor Day)’ and ‘the week to be known as *Seachtain na gCrann*’ (Arbor Week) (Anon, 1905a). In 1909, the ‘praiseworthy efforts of the IFS and the Gaelic League’ in promoting ‘Arbor Day’ were acknowledged in a report of tree planting at Ring College (Anon, 1909). Charles Dawson (1914) wrote that the cause of tree planting was ‘at once, political, reforming and philanthropic’. The last days of October or early November were considered by the IFS and the Gaelic League as the suitable time to celebrate Arbor Day. In *A History of Irish Forestry*, Neeson (1991) commented that the ‘nationalists ... regardless of their own lack of experience or expertise, held a view on forestry coloured by a romanticism, with limitless economic potential’ ... ‘They tended to join in an unlikely alliance with the landowners to promote programmes of forestry and reafforestation’. Arthur Griffith (1871-1922) was a journalist who employed his journalism to radicalise nationalists. In his Sinn Féin policy of 1905, he identified afforestation as a component of an economic and political programme for the country (McCartney, 1973). In an obituary of Griffith in the *Donegal News*, it was stated that he ‘was a strong advocate of the preservation of our Irish Woods and encouraged an annual “Arbor Day”’ (‘Benmore’, 1923). Apart from a photograph of Griffith attending a tree planting ceremony in the grounds of the recently opened St Ultan’s Hospital, Dublin, no further evidence of his involvement in Arbor Day events was located (Anon, 1919e). In 1917 and 1918, Griffith was elected to a parliamentary seat in Cavan East and Tyrone West and became vice President of the first Dail in 1919. In 1921, he chaired the Irish delegation, which negotiated the establishment of the [Irish] Free State (McGee, 2015).

Afforestation and Sinn Féin

Among the resolutions passed at the annual meeting of Sinn Féin which was held in September 1918, the ninth resolution read ‘Take steps through County Councils and Local Government Bodies to inaugurate an All-Ireland Arbor Day to make a beginning in restoring the woods by planting groves or belts on sites of historic significance’ (Anon, 1918a). Though the IFS with the support of the Gaelic League inaugurated Arbor Day in 1904, the direct involvement of local and government authorities to plant at historic sites was new. At least one local Sinn Féin Club held an Arbor Day event. In November 1918, members of the Con Colbaird Sinn Féin Club, including Mr T. McCarthy, President, and Councillor P. S. Doyle planted 45 trees in the grounds of the Oblate Church, Inchicore, Dublin and five trees at the nearby Christian Brothers’ school grounds, James Street. The planting operations were overseen by two Dublin Corporation Gardening staff (Anon, 1918b).

Though the IFS and Sinn Féin both promoted tree planting in 1918, they held separate events in the same Dublin suburb. The IFS Arbor Day planting took place, with the permission of Dublin Corporation, at James Street Basin on the first Saturday in December. Mr R. J. Kelly K.C. said that ‘it was deemed advisable’ to postpone the date from the usual first Saturday in November. He emphasised how important it was to plant trees following

the denuding of the country for war purposes. (Others had attributed deforestation to the Congested Districts Board and farmers.) Trees provided not only shelter and ornament but in time, valuable timber. Mr Buckley (City Engineer) said that in 1917, 12,000 trees had been planted at Roundwood, Co. Wicklow (location of a city reservoir) and 7,000 were due to be planted in 1918. The scale of tree planting indicates long-term investment in timber by Dublin Corporation and Rathmines and Rathgar Urban District Council (above). Six lime trees, supplied by Messrs W. Power and Co. nurserymen, Waterford, were planted by Rev T. W. O'Ryan, Mr O'Looney, T.C., Mrs MacAlister and Mr Buckley. Among those present were Town Commissioners and Prof Henry and Mr Knowldin of the IFS. Due to the imminent General Election, few politicians were present (Anon, 1918c).

On 27th August 1919, the Minister for Agriculture in the Provisional Government, (First Dail Eireann) Riobaird Bartun (Robert Barton), wrote to each County Committee of Agriculture informing them that 1st November was designated Arbour (*sic*) Day and sought their co-operation in 'making Arbour Day a National festival' and the assistance of qualified staff employed by each Committee (Bartun, 1919). The function of the Day was to commence the re-afforestation of Ireland. A pamphlet outlining how, where and by whom the scheme would operate had also been distributed to Cumainn by the Department of Agriculture, 6 Harcourt Street, Dublin (Anon, 1919).

That year, seven Arbor Day events were organised in various parts of the country. In late November, 40 trees, elm, sycamore, horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), copper beech and six oak (*Quercus*) 'In memory of the dead' were planted in the grounds of the Oblate Church, Inchicore and on the adjoining street. The event was organised by the Dublin Corporation Paving Committee. Dr P. D. Ua Dubhgaill, T.C. and Mr J. O'Flaherty seconded a vote of thanks to the Oblate Community (Anon, 1919a). Saplings were also planted on the northern side of St Laurence O'Toole Church, Seville Place, Dublin. Midleton Urban District Council, (Co. Cork) organised tree planting in the town (Anon, 1919b). In Castlebar, Co. Mayo, hundreds of trees were planted in the College [St Gerald's] grounds and in the Old Church Cemetery leading to Lough Lannagh. Concern about deforestation continued, trees were being felled and the worst offenders were the CD Board (Congested Districts Board) on land they had acquired, 'Commercially and from a health point of view, the disappearance of woods from the county takes away from its picturesqueness' (Anon, 1919c). One thousand five hundred trees were planted on three sites near Tallow, Co. Waterford (Anon, 1919d). , While Athenry Sinn Fein Club planned an event but no further details of this or others organised by Sinn Fein Cumainn were located (Anon, 1919e).

On 30th October 1920, the IFS issued a notice advising that the first Saturday in November would be designated 'National Arbor Day'. As before, they suggested that national schools, local authorities and groups should arrange tree planting ceremonies and advocated tree planting and spoke of their benefits. Trees were made available to those on smallholdings by the Department of Agriculture and local authorities (Anon, 1920). In December 1920, before many people, the Lord Mayor of Dublin and Fr Lynch, OFM planted a tree in the grounds of St Ultan's Hospital, Charlemont Street, Dublin (Anon, 1920a).

At least one County Committee of Agriculture promoted 'National Arbor Day', (the title used at that time). The following notice appeared in the *Westmeath Examiner* (Anon, 1920b). Co. Westmeath Committee of Agriculture and Technical Instruction Afforestation: Arbor Day, 'The Committee are prepared to lease, with the option of purchase, lots of 3 acres plus upwards suitable for planting and solicit the co-operation of landowners in the matter. Offers no later than 13th December. Everyone who can plant a tree is requested to do so. Committee can provide trees 2/6 [two shillings and six pence] for each fruit tree and one penny for each forest tree. M. Corcoran, Secretary to the Committee'

In 1922, the Committee advised that trees were available at 1/6 [one shilling and six pence] and that the Horticultural Instructor would visit and advise landowners (Anon, 1922). The scheme continued until 1925. In March 1923, sixteen replacements and one additional tree in memory of a local man, Joe Howley, were planted in Oranmore, Co. Galway. The trees had originally been planted on Arbor Day 1919 to 'commemorate the execution of 16 Irish martyrs during the terror of the Black and Tans' (Anon, 1923).

In June 1923, a caption 'Useful Society Dissolved' signalled ominous news of the IFS. Difficulty maintaining public interest in their work, caused the dissolution of the IFS (Anon, 1923a). Due to the War of Independence and Civil War, public interest may have been difficult to maintain. Neeson (1991) wrote that the IFS held 'the view current in England that trees could and should be made to grow anywhere in Ireland. It held meetings throughout the country and its speakers were people of influence and standing, its ideas received considerable publicity'. This comment is borne out in the large and small scale Arbor Day events they organised in cities and towns and the reports/notices of it in newspapers. A.C. Forbes, the first Director of Forestry in Ireland, credited the IFS 'with exerting sufficient influence to have forestry first seriously considered' (Neeson, 1991). Other credits were supporting urban tree planting and, more broadly, environmental education in schools.

Themes emerging in the first phase of Arbor Day include afforestation on a national scale, involvement of children in tree planting, inclusion of tree planting in political policy and government policy. Support by particular organisations, Irish Forestry Society and Sinn Féin, and particular individuals, was crucial to its success. The name T. P. Gill occurs with regard to Arbor Day. Gill, Secretary of the DATI attended Arbor Day events and also supported the development of other environmental or horticultural initiatives.

Phase II Arbor Day – Department of Lands 1935–1939

Though the Provisional Government promoted Arbor Day, the Government of the Free State were slow to support Arbor Day. Neeson (1991) summarised the situation as follows, 'no policy, no money and no votes'. Following a pause of twelve years, Arbor Days were re-established by the Government as a means to promote forestry. In 1935, the Minister for Lands established a national scheme for afforestation. In February 1935, the Department of Lands sought the co-operation in this task of 5,000 national (primary) schools with their population of 500,000 pupils. March was designated as Arbor Month and an Arbor

Day was selected by each school. Leaflets were circulated to schools and each was to apply to the Department of Lands for a voucher to obtain trees free of charge from a designated nurseryman. Co-operation with local groups and societies and a planting ceremony was advocated. School grounds, areas around fair and market grounds, allotments and waterworks were suggested sites for planting. Classes in the preceding months would prepare the schoolchildren to plant the trees themselves (Anon 1935). Given the Department's remit to promote forestry, it was unlikely to embrace educational opportunities in Arbor Day, though individual schools did so. Applications were received for generous supplies of trees from schools and others. Due to high demand, in March 1935, the Department issued a statement saying that it could only supply trees to school managers. The trees were being provided for Arbor Day from departmental and commercial nurseries and if the results warranted it, more expenditure would be made by the State to support Arbor Day (Anon, 1935a).

Tree planting in schools in various parts of the country were reported in the press. In Co. Cork, 50 trees were planted adjacent to Knockavilla Schools, Upton (Anon, 1935b); at St Patrick's Schools, Dunmanway, two dozen trees were planted (Anon, 1935c); at Ballingearry Technical School, Rev. C. Holland C.C. planted the first of 1,000 trees in the presence of local officials of the Co. Vocational Educational Committee (Anon, 1935d); at the Town Park Mallow, Archdeacon Corbett, P.P. planted the first tree and students from the Vocational School planted more trees (Anon, 1935e). In Co. Mayo, tree planting took place at De La Salle National School, Castlebar and the Boys National School, Ballina, where Fr Denis O'Connor planted the first tree and commented that due to the shortage of timber 'the trees would beautify and be an asset to the country' (Anon, 1935f). The planting ceremony at Vocational School, Ballymote, Co. Sligo was attended by Canon Quinn, P.P., Mr Murphy, CEO, Mr Collins, Agricultural Instructor and members of local committees (Anon, 1935g). At St Mary's School, Latnamard, Co. Monaghan, 50 small trees were planted (Anon, 1935h). Under the supervision of Mr Tyndall, County Instructor in Horticulture, 250 trees were planted at the Christian Brothers' Schools, Naas, Co. Kildare. He also lectured to senior students on the 'nature and object of the work' (Anon, 1935i).

In 1936, beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), pine (*Pinus*), poplar and Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) were planted on land donated by Mr John Lehane to Cappaboy School, near Bantry, Co. Cork. Speaking in Irish, Mr Vaughan explained the benefit of tree planting in unsheltered places and gave examples of tree-linked local place names. With patriotic sentiment, he reminded the schoolchildren of the motto: 'For the glory of God and the honour of Ireland' (Anon, 1936). These words, first spoken by Joseph Mary Plunkett prior to his execution following the Easter Rising 1916, have entered the lexicon of patriotic phrases.

In 1937, Arbor Day was marked by Cappagh Hospital, Dublin (then a children's hospital) and local schools, where school children planted 40 trees in the grounds (Anon, 1937). At Athy, Co. Kildare, 400 trees were planted by 140 boys in the grounds of the Christian Brothers' School. The trees were 240 Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra* subsp.

nigra) and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), 60 Sitka spruce and 100 poplar, the latter on grounds by the river Barrow. The Arbor Day was organised by staff and local forester Mr Timothy McCarthy. An interesting aspect of this event was its connection with a course in agricultural science that Christian Brothers' Schools had been running for three years (Anon, 1937a). This is likely the second level Agricultural Science course.

One school, Dundalk Grammar School, Co. Louth, embraced the scheme wholeheartedly. In April 1936, 80 trees, comprising beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), chestnut, birch, sycamore, Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), Scots pine and Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra* var. *maritima*) were planted by staff and pupils. Mr A. N. McBride demonstrated tree planting. The Headmaster, Rev. A. A. Hanbidge, referred to the Government's desire to impress the importance of re-afforestation on young people (Anon, 1936a). A report mentioned that an additional 60 trees were planted by pupils of Dundalk Grammar School in 1937 (Anon, 1937b). In 1938, oak, fir (*Abies*), beech and cypress (*Cupressus*) supplied by Messrs Hammond, Shillelagh, Co. Wicklow, on the orders of the Department of Forestry (*sic*), were planted in the School. Rev. Hanbidge outlined the importance of trees and Mr McBride described the physiology of trees (Anon, 1938). A year later, Rev. Hanbidge spoke about Arbor Day in ancient Israel. Arbor Day, he claimed, could be traced to the period of the Second Temple and he continued that there was 'a feeling of something in common between the life of man and the life of a tree'. Referring to contemporary Palestine, he described how following the Balfour Declaration, Arbor Day was re-established on the 15th Shevat. He explained how newcomers to school in Palestine were selected to plant trees, 'the idea being to encourage them in the spirit of agricultural Palestine' (Anon, 1939). A teacher, Mr S. Gatenby, spoke about the importance of the 'new science' of forestry. The trees planted, which had been supplied by the Department of Lands, included *Macrocarpa* (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), Lawson (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) Norway pine (likely Norway spruce, *Picea abies*) and Sitka spruce. Later, the students 'were shown films in the new school cinema of large forest areas throughout the world' (Anon, 1939).

The Minister for Lands reported to the Dail that the Department had spent £200 less than in the previous year on trees for 945 schools (Anon, 1937) (Table 1). A review of the Arbor Day scheme in 1940 stated that notices were sent to 7,000 (note 2,000 more than reported above but from the evidence in the newspaper reports, second level schools were included in the scheme). The comment that 'these reductions were not unexpected in view of the limited facilities for planting' was ominous and the scheme was suspended for 1939/1940 (Anon, 1940). Though discrepancies between the numbers given in 1935/36 occur, a declining interest in tree planting is noticeable.

Year	Munster	Leinster	Connacht	Ulster	Gaeltacht	Total *	Total **
1934/5							1524
1935/6	234	145	131	45	30	585	900
1936/7							690
1937/8							599

*Anon 1937 ** Anon 1940

Table 1 Numbers of schools applying to the Department of Lands Arbor Day Scheme

In the fifteen newspaper reports reviewed, it is obvious that clergy and local government officials supported Arbor Days in local primary (national) and secondary/technical/vocational schools. Where the content of speeches had been noted, the benefits of re-forestation, increasing acreage of land under trees and subsequent employment in forests and timber industries were emphasised. One speech at Cappaboy, captured contemporary culture and nationalism (Anon, 1936). In 1939, a speech at Dundalk Grammar School expressed religious and pro-Jewish sentiment, likely prompted by the number of Jews settling in Palestine and rising Nazism in Germany. Tree planting ceremonies took place in school grounds, by local rivers or town parks with the numbers of trees planted varying from a handful to hundreds. Agricultural and horticultural advisors contributed their technical expertise at several sites. The trees supplied by the Department of Lands from their own or commercial nurseries comprised large growing deciduous or coniferous trees, and excepting birch, were introduced rather than native trees. An emphasis on planting native tree species is a late 20th century development.

Phase III Arbor Day – Trees for Ireland and other organisations 1951-1984

The suspension of support for Arbor Day by the Department of Lands coincided with the outbreak of the Second World War and the Emergency in Ireland. Following the post war recovery, Arbor Days were re-established in the 1950s, organised this time by special interest and community groups with support from local authorities.

Trees for Ireland

Trees for Ireland (TfI), a voluntary organisation founded in 1949 aimed to inform public opinion on forestry, on the supply of timber and tree planting for amenity. In 1948, the Government had adopted a long-term afforestation plan (Forest Service, 2008). Among their publications was 'Planning Arbor Day'. The organisation stressed that Arbor Day must be a 'neighbourhood function', a big attendance would draw attention to the 'vital importance of tree planting' (Fitzpatrick, n.d.).

From 1952, (National) Arbor Day events were held in Dublin with the Lord Mayor or Deputy Lord Mayor, clergy, politicians and schoolchildren present. In 1952, the Lord Mayor, Alderman A. Clarkin, planted a ceremonial tree at St Vincent's Orphanage, Glasnevin. The proceedings were opened by Mr T. J. McElligott (Chairman of TFI Central Committee) and the trees were blessed by Rev. M. Boylan, P.P. (Anon, 1952). A year later, the Limerick Branch of TFI organised a local ceremony. Boys from the Prospect district of the city assembled in the People's Park and carried 100 trees to the planting site at Hyde Road, Prospect. Councillor P. O'Connell planted the first tree (Anon, 1953). In 1955, the opening ceremony of National Arbor Week occurred on 10th March at Ringsend Park, Dublin. Following a blessing by Canon Gaynor P.P., the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government, Dr John O'Donovan, and Lord Mayor, Alderman Alfred Byrne, T.D., planted the first trees. The remainder were planted by pupils from local technical and primary schools. Sixty saplings were donated by Dublin Corporation and the balance by TFI (Anon, 1955).

A year later, the President of TFI, Mr T. J. McElligott, advised that 'The meaning of the ceremonial planting was to inculcate in people an interest in forestry.' The National Arbor Day event took place in Marino, Dublin, where 15 beech saplings were planted in Marino Park, 16 whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*) in Fairview Green and 20 mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*) in St Aidan's Park. Councillor Denis Larkin T.D., Lord Mayor, planted the first tree. Local members of the Dail, Dublin Corporation officials, members of organisations affiliated to TFI and hundreds of boys and girls from local schools participated (Anon, 1956).

To mark National Arbor Day in 1957, beech and or birch trees were planted in Ballsbridge, Dublin (Anon, 1957a and Anon, 1957b). The trees, which had been provided by Dublin Corporation and blessed by the local curate, were planted on land by the River Dodder donated by Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien, a well-known bakery, and in Herbert Park. The first tree was planted by Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Lorcan Bourke. Mr H. M. Fitzpatrick, Council of TFI (a noted forester) thanked Dublin Corporation for the trees and workmen. The ceremony was also attended by members of the Civic Institute and *Muintir na Tire* and pupils from local primary and secondary schools (Anon, 1957a and Anon, 1957b). In 1958, *The Irish Times* included a photograph of four girls from the Dominican Convent Secondary School, Ballyfermot, planting a tree to mark National Arbor Day, an event watched by Councillor James Carroll, T.D., Lord Mayor and Mr T. J. McElligott, TFI Association (*sic*) (Anon, 1958). The School had opened in 1956. The 1959 National Arbor Day ceremony must have been a festive one, with the Ballyfermot Boys' Accordion Band playing for hundreds of schoolchildren who had assembled at Cleggin Road, Ballyfermot. Organised by Trees for Ireland, the Ballyfermot Residents' Association and Dublin Corporation Parks Department, the ceremony was attended by Deputy Lord Mayor, Mr F. J. Mullen and members of TFI. Before the ceremony began, the Tricolour was raised by Mr Eamonn Rooney T.D., the first report of the inclusion of the national flag in Arbor Day. The planted trees were blessed by Fr M. C. Troy P.P. (Anon, 1959 and Anon, 1959a).

National Arbor Day was held on 11th March 1960. Tree planting of 66 flowering cherry (*Prunus*) trees took place at Long Meadows, Chapelizod, the sports ground of Colaiste Mhuire, Parnell Square with Mr Eamonn Rooney, T.D., T. J. Burke T.D. and Mr McElligott, Tfl present (Anon, 1960). In 1961, *The Irish Times* reported that to mark the 10th anniversary of their foundation, Tfl were organising an Arbor Month, which was to commence in mid-February (Anon, 1961). This was more likely the 10th Arbor Day as the organisation was founded in 1949. The Minister for Education, Dr [P.] Hillery, attended a National Arbor Day ceremony at St Philomena's National Schools, Palmerstown, Dublin. Sixty trees of several varieties were planted. Mr A. H. L. Harbourne, Tfl President and Fr Camac, P.P. Chapelizod, attended (Anon, 1961a). In Mallow, Co. Cork, the Tfl local branch organised a tree-planting event in the town, attended by local dignitaries. Mrs. D. Bowley filmed the proceedings and the film was to be shown in schools and to the public (Anon, 1961b). This was innovative at the time. In Co. Sligo, 700 shelter belt trees were given to students of Grange Vocational School for planting at their rural homes (Anon, 1961c).

In November 1961, Tfl sponsored an Arbor Month to promote tree planting by private landowners. Booklets entitled 'Planting for Profit in Ireland' and 'Planning an Arbor Day' were available from their office in 30 Westmoreland Street, Dublin. Assistance of the cultural and rural groups to promote tree planting was sought (Anon, 1961d). Whether any tree planting took place on private land is unclear but one incidence of tree planting occurred at Nephin Park, Cabra, a public park. Here, Canon Burke, P.P. commented to an audience of the Deputy Mayor, local representatives and members of Tfl that 'the trees would beautify the park and make it a source of joy' (Anon, 1961e).

In 1963, Mr [C.J.] Haughey, Minister for Justice, planted a tree at Mary Queen of Angels National School, Gorteen Road, Ballyfermot. In thanking the organisers and parishioners, the parish priest, Canon Troy, commented that 'their enthusiasm and co-operation augured well for the welfare of Ballyfermot' (Anon, 1963). While according to newspaper reports most events took place in Dublin, in 1964 an acre of young trees was to be planted at Ballyduff, Co. Waterford, a scheme sponsored by Tfl and the Department of Lands (Anon, 1964). In 1968, Tfl and the West Finglas Residents' Association held a tree planting ceremony at Wellmount Avenue, West Finglas. Dublin Corporation supplied birch and cherry trees, which were planted by the Lord Mayor and local children (Anon, 1968). A year later, to mark National Arbor Day, Tfl had 16 Lombardy poplar trees planted in the grounds of Bonnybrook National School, Coolock. Mr Frank Cluskey, T.D., Lord Mayor attended (Anon, 1969).

By the 1970s, photographs rather than written reports recorded Arbor Day in the newspapers. Trees were planted by students from Mother of Divine Grace School, Ballygall, (1970); S.S. Gabriel's and Raphael's School, Ballyfermot, assisted by the Taoiseach, Mr Jack Lynch, (1971); Arbour Hill at O'Devaney Gardens, North Circular Road (1972); and Virgin Mary National School, Ballymun (1973). In the 1970s, Letters to the Editor of the *Irish Independent* and *Irish Press* informed the public about forthcoming National Arbor Days in March organised by Tfl, a residents' association and a local authority. Such events

were held in various parts of Dublin city and suburbs, Deer Park, Mount Merrion (1974); Beechfield Road, Cherryfield estate, Walkinstown (1975); Sarsfield Park, Lucan, (1976); Havelock Square, Bath Avenue, Irishtown (1977); Hampstead Park, Glasnevin (1979) (Mulholland, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1979).

Two published photographs record National Arbor Day in the 1980s. One shows, Councillor William Cumiskey, Lord Mayor, planting a tree at Liberty Park, adjacent to Foley Street and Corporation Street as Mr Owen Mulholland, President and Miss Sal Cahill, Hon. Sec. Tfi and young people watch. (Anon, 1980). The other records President Hillery planting an ash in the grounds of Áras an Uachtaráin in 1984 (Fitzpatrick, n.d.).

Arbor Day activities by local organisations

In March 1951, Arbor Week was observed in University College Cork (Anon, 1951). In a 'symbolical gesture' and in support of the 'Trees for Ireland' campaign, the President Dr A. O'Rahilly planted a tree. In his speech, he outlined how tree felling by the English, poor land tenure and Government indifference led to a destruction of trees. He advocated using 'our solar income' to grow timber. Addressing the 'aesthetic argument', and what are now understood as the environmental benefits of trees, he said trees would 'restore denuded beauty spots', assist with drainage and flooding and provide shelter and that local authorities, groups and individuals could restore 'our treasure of beauty and usefulness' [of trees] (O'Rahilly, 1951). In Rosslare Harbour, Co. Wexford, the local Guild of the Irish Country Women's Association, in conjunction with eight local organisations, sponsored an Arbor Day in the same year. In an echo of tree planting ceremonies in England (Hepperson, 2012), local children paraded to a site where they planted 2,000 trees. The local Parish Priest imparted a blessing on the work and appealed to them to respect and continue to plant trees (Anon, 1951). In March 1955, Alderman Alfred Byrne, T.D., Lord Mayor, planted a tree at Armagh Road to mark Crumlin Arbor Day with children from four schools present (Anon, 1955a). Two years later, Mr R. Briscoe, Lord Mayor planted a tree as part of an Arbor Day ceremony organised by St Agnes' Horticultural Society at Bangor Road, Crumlin. He urged those present to be interested in trees planted in public places. Following a blessing by the local parish priest, trees were planted along the roadside by pupils from St Columba's C.B.S., Clogher Road and local Technical Schools (Anon, 1957).

Rathfarnham Horticultural Society organised an Arbor Day in the grounds of Loreto Park. Boys and girls from De La Salle National and Loreto Convent National Schools together with Catholic Boy Scouts formed a guard of honour. Seven trees were blessed and planted by Canon O'Donnell, P.P. Representatives from the Horticultural Society and Tfi also attended (Anon, 1961f). It was the third such event organised by the Society and prior to planting, Canon O'Donnell had given a lecture on trees to the pupils (Anon, 1961g). In Cabra West, Dublin, trees were planted in the grounds of St Finbarr's National School, the Dominican Convent and the Church of the Most Precious Blood. The boys had subscribed to the purchase of the trees and each became a custodian of a tree. The trees were blessed by Canon Burke P.P. and Fr O'Farrell planted the first tree (Anon, 1961h). *Macra na Tuaithe* was one of the organisations requested by Tfi to support tree planting.

The Skibbereen branch organised a tree planting ceremony of 100 trees in O'Donovan Rossa Park, Skibbereen, Co. Cork, where students from the Vocational School participated (Anon, 1961i). In Loughrea, Co. Galway, members of *Macra na Tuaithe*, [now *Foroige*, an organisation for rural youth] under guidance from Mr Pat Lynch, rural science teacher in Loughrea Vocational School, planted 1,000 Lawson cypresses near their homes (Anon, 1961j).

Autonomous groups embraced the sentiment of Arbor Day to advocate tree planting and in doing so, they promoted their local communities, commemorated significant events and enhanced their environment. In 1972, to mark the 100th anniversary of the first Arbor Day in Nebraska, USA, Cork Road – Kingsmeadow Residents Association organised a tree-planting event in Waterford. When opening the ceremony, Councillor T. Galvin, Mayor of Waterford stated that the planting of these trees 'on one of the main approaches to the City, will beautify the surroundings and project a very pleasing image to our visitors'. He urged local children to care for the trees, which had been sponsored by local companies (Anon, 1972). Under the auspices of the local Tidy Towns Committee, the fourth Arbor Day was planned for 27th March with trees and shrubs being planted in various parts of Letterkenny, Co. Donegal (Anon, 1982a). Golf clubs also organised Arbor Days to encourage tree planting on their courses. In 1978, Mount Bellew Golf Club (Co. Galway) planned to plant more than 200 trees, exceeding numbers planted in their previous Arbor Day (Anon, 1978a). A similar event was organised a year later (Anon, 1979a). Kinsale Golf Club (Co. Cork) held an Arbor Day in 1984 (Anon, 1984). Since beekeepers have a particular interest in trees, it was not surprising that they would support Arbor Day. The Centenary of the Irish Beekeepers Association and Arbor Day was marked with a tree planting ceremony at St Colman's Vocational School, Midleton, Co. Cork. Canon Ahern P.P., President of the East Cork Beekeepers' Association planted the tree (Anon, 1981).

Arbor Day events were also organised by schools, independently of 'Trees for Ireland'. At Cloyne National School, Co. Cork, the following trees were planted in memory of named individuals or events: oak – visit of Pope John Paul II; blue spruce (*Picea pungens* 'Glauc') – Padraig Pearse, silver holly (*Ilex aquifolium* 'Variegata') – Michael Davitt; European lime (*Tilia x europaea*) – Ireland's involvement in Europe; ash – St Colman; and a weeping ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* 'Pendula') – Christy Ring, a native of the town and noted hurler (O'Loinsigh, 1979). This was the only example of a specific choice of trees for an Arbor Day event. Similar Arbor Day events were organised at Wesley College, Ballinteer, Dublin, the Vocational School, Cobh, Co Cork, and Christian Brothers' School, Thurles, Co. Tipperary in 1980, 1982 and 1983 respectively (Anon, 1980a, Anon, 1982 and Anon, 1983).

Since 1985, The Tree Council of Ireland which comprises representatives from some 55 local authorities, professional organisations, state agencies, commercial organisations and many voluntary groups, has organised National Tree Week in the first week of March each year.

Date	Organiser	County	Town/ Street	Location	Type of site	Purpose	Trees/ Amounts
1904	IFS	Dublin	Lucan	Spa Hotel	Hotel	Foundation	Sycamore
1904	IFS	Dublin	Dublin	Phoenix Park	Public Park	Foundation	Sycamore
1905		Tyrone	Dungannon	Workhouse	Workhouse	re-forest North	Sycamore Chestnut
1908		Down	Newry	Dromintee	Primary school	school grounds	
1908		Down	Mayobridge		local district	community planting	forest and apple trees
1908	IFS	Dublin	Dublin	Fairview	public park	ceremonial	
1908	IFS	Cork	Doneraile				
1908		Dublin	Blackrock	Dominican Convent School	Secondary school		
1908		Dublin	Dun Laoire	Sandycove			
1908		Limerick	Limerick	Island Bank Arthur's Quay and Sir Harry's Mall	Quayside		street trees
1908	IFS	Dublin	Dalkey	Harold's School	national school	school grounds	
1909		Waterford	Ring	Ring College	national school	school grounds	
1916	IFS	Dublin	Terenure	Meanee	Horticultural School	school grounds	apple and Poplar
1916		Roscommon		Roscommon Workhouse	workhouse		
1917	IFS	Dublin	Harold's Cross	Park	public park		ornamental trees
1917		Down	Newry	Kildare Street and Trevor Hill	street trees		
1918	Sinn Fein Club	Dublin	Inchicore	Oblate Church	church grounds		
1918	IFS	Dublin	James Street	James Street Basin	public open space		6 Lime
1919	Prov Gov	Dublin	Inchicore	Oblate Church	church grounds	memorial trees	
1919	Prov Gov	Galway	Oranmore			memorial trees	
1919	Prov Gov	Dublin	Charlemont St	St Ultan's	hospital	ornamental tree	
1919	Prov Gov	Dublin	Seville Place		Street		
1919	Prov Gov	Cork	Midleton		Street		
1919	Prov Gov	Mayo	Castlebar	College and cemetery			hundreds of trees
1919	Prov Gov	Waterford	Tallow		local district		1,500 trees
1920		Dublin	Charlemont St	St Ultan's	hospital	ornamental tree	
1923		Galway	Oranmore			memorial trees	
1935	Dept. of Lands	Cork	Upton	Knockvilla	national school		50
1935	Dept. of Lands	Cork	Ballingeary		Technical school		1000
1935	Dept. of Lands	Cork	Dunmanway	St Patrick's School	national school		24

Date	Organiser	County	Town/ Street	Location	Type of site	Purpose	Trees/ Amounts
1935	Dept. of Lands	Cork	Mallow		Vocational school		
1935	Dept. of Lands	Mayo	Castlebar	De La Salle	national school		
1935	Dept. of Lands	Mayo	Ballina	Boys N.S	national school		
1935	Dept. of Lands	Sligo	Ballymote	Vocational School	Vocational school		
1935	Dept. of Lands	Monaghan	Latnamard		national school		50
1935	Dept. of Lands	Kildare	Naas	Christian Brothers'	national school		250
1936	Dept. of Lands	Louth	Dundalk	Grammar School	Secondary school		80
1936	Dept. of Lands	Cork	Bantry	Cappaboy	national school		
1937	Dept. of Lands	Dublin	Finglas	Cappagh	hospital		40
1937	Dept. of Lands	Kildare	Athy	Christian Brothers'	Secondary school		400
1937	Dept. of Lands	Louth	Dundalk	Grammar School	Secondary school		
1938	Dept. of Lands	Louth	Dundalk	Grammar School	Secondary school		60
1951	ICA	Wexford	Rosslare Harbour		local district		2,000
1951		Cork	UC Cork		university		
1952	Tfl	Dublin	Glasnevin	St Vincent's Orphanage	orphanage		1
1953	Tfl	Limerick	Prospect	Hyde Road	public open space		100
1955	Tfl	Dublin	Ringsend	Public park	public park		
1955		Dublin	Crumlin	Armagh Rd	street tree		
1956	Tfl	Dublin	Marino	St Aiden's Park - Marino Park - Fairview Green	street trees		
1957	Tfl	Dublin	Ballsbridge	Dodder River	public open space		
1957	Hort Society	Dublin	Crumlin	Bangor Road	street trees		
1958	Tfl	Dublin	Ballyfermot	Dominican Convent	school		
1959	Tfl and Res Assoc	Dublin	Ballyfermot	Cleggin Road	public open space		
1960	Tfl	Dublin	Chapelizod	Long Meadow	school grounds		60
1961	Tfl	Dublin	Palmerstown	St Philomena's N.S.	national school		
1961	Hort Society	Dublin	Rathfarnham	Loreto Park	public open space		7
1961	Local Schools	Dublin	Cabra		school & church grounds		
1961	Tfl	Cork	Mallow		public open space		
1961	Tfl	Sligo	Grange			shelter belt trees	

Date	Organiser	County	Town/ Street	Location	Type of site	Purpose	Trees/ Amounts
1961	Tfl	Dublin	Cabra	Nephrin Park	public park		
1961	Macra na Tuaithe	Cork	Skibbereen	O'Donovan Rossa Park	public park		100
1961	Macra na Tuaithe	Galway	Loughrea	Homes of Voc. School students			1000
1963	Tfl	Dublin	Ballyfermot	Gorteen Road	national school		
1964	Tfl and Dept of Lands	Waterford	Ballyduff				acre of trees
1968	Tfl and Res Assoc	Dublin	West Finglas	Wellmount Ave	public open space		
1969	Tfl	Dublin	Coolock	Bonnybrook	national school		16
1970	Tfl	Dublin	Ballygall	Mother of Divine Grace	national school		
1971	Tfl	Dublin	Ballyfermot	S.S. Gabriel's and Raphael's	national school		
1972	Tfl	Dublin	North Circular rd	O'Devaney Gardens	public open space		
1972	Cork Road Res Assoc	Waterford	Waterford		public open space	community planting	
1973	Tfl	Dublin	Ballymun	Virgin Mary NS			
1974	Tfl	Dublin	Mount Merrion	Deerpark	public park		
1975	Tfl	Dublin	Walkinstown	Beechfield Rd	public open space		
1976	Tfl	Dublin	Lucan	Sarsfield Park	public open space		
1977	Tfl	Dublin	Bath Ave	Havelock Sq.	public park		
1977	Golf Club	Galway	Mount Bellew		golf course		
1978	Golf Club	Galway	Mount Bellew		golf course		200
1979	Golf Club	Cork	Kinsale		golf course		
1979	Tfl	Dublin	Glasnevin	Hampstead Pk	public park		
1979	local group	Cork	Cloyne	National School	national school	memorial trees	
1980	School	Dublin	Ballinteer	Wesley College	Secondary school		
1981	Beekeepers	Cork	Midleton			memorial trees	1
1982	Tidy Towns	Donegal	Letterkenny		public open space		
1982	School	Cork	Cobh	Vocational Schools	school	school grounds	
1983	School	Tipperary	Thurles	Christian Brothers'	school	school grounds	
1984	Tfl	Dublin	Phoenix Park	Áras an Uachtaráin	park		1

Table 2 Location of All Arbor Day Events, 1904–1994

Review of empirical data

Based on newspaper reports, 86 Arbor Day events occurred in 16 of the 32 counties in Ireland, with 42 in Dublin and 14 in Cork. Tree planting venues varied from inner city, suburbs, and rural areas most commonly schools (31), parks, and public open space (32). (Table 2) Tree planting at orphanages, workhouses and hospitals demonstrated early examples of therapeutic gardens. The Chesterfield Avenue in the Phoenix Park links the Wellington monument, site of the IFS first major Arbor Day in 1904 with the Tfl Arbor Day ceremony in Áras an Uachtaráin eighty years later. Venues selected in Dublin between the years 1951 and 1984 were generally recently developed parks and open spaces, often associated with public housing schemes or developing suburbs. Choice of these sites demonstrated a shift to tree planting in the public realm by local authorities, indicative of a growing sentiment that viewed public parks and open spaces as part of an urban environment that could benefit all inhabitants, serving interests both directly and indirectly, including didactic, public health and commercial interests. In Ireland, tree planting ceremonies were political occasions with local councillors and members of parliament present. Some, as those in Oranmore, Co. Galway in 1919 and 1923, were expressions of nationalist sentiment and identity (Anon, 1923). IFS events were attended by prominent civil servants and foresters whereas during the Tfl period, the attendance included local and national politicians and many schoolchildren. The participation of clergy at Arbor Day events was noticeable, indicating their influential role in local schools and community. Dr. A. O'Rahilly, President of University College Cork, was right to claim that 'local authorities, institutions, schools and individuals can do much [by planting trees] to restore our treasure of beauty and usefulness' (O'Rahilly, 1951). His comments capture the sentiments which motivated each phase of Arbor Day and an outcome of each Arbor Day ceremony.

Conclusion

The intention of Arbor Day in Ireland was tree planting. However, the motivations of three sponsors, Irish Forestry Society 1904-1923, Department of Lands 1935-1939 and Trees for Ireland 1952-1984, differed. The IFS promoted forestry and re-afforestation of Ireland and tree planting in rural and urban areas. Through tree planting in schools in the late 1930s, children became aware of forestry and, indirectly, the Department of Land's afforestation policy. Tfl also promoted forestry but their Arbor Day events from 1951-1984 involved amenity trees planting in public open spaces in towns and cities. Tfl urged local organisations to become involved in tree planting schemes and this occurred with *Macra na Tuaithe*, the Irish Countrywomen's Association and Residents' Associations. The theme of Arbor Day allowed golf clubs, a Tidy Towns Committee and a beekeeping association to garner support and plant trees in their locality. The Department of Lands, a Government body, could issue circulars to school managers. The IFS and Tfl, both voluntary organisations, had to rely on publicity via newspapers, which they did with good effect. Concerted publicity by IFS in 1908, and Tfl in 1961, resulted

in eight documented ceremonies in both years. Following the declaration of Arbour Day by the Provisional Government in 1919, seven tree-planting events were reported in the newspapers. Newspapers were valuable sources of information for this research. However, from the 1970s onwards, reporting of these events declined and were limited to photographs, generally of politicians and schoolchildren. As Healy (1980) commented, those who advocated tree planting could no longer 'depend on getting a deal of media attention'. Since newspapers are subject to editorial policy, availability of journalists and competing newsworthy topics, Arbor Day events may not have received press reports. Research in Parliamentary and Departmental reports could provide a 'policy' or State view of Arbor Day rather than a 'practice' view as evident in newspaper reports. In each phase of Arbor Day, the support of local authorities and local horticultural or forestry expertise was evident. It was most apparent in the events organised by 'Trees for Ireland', where Arbor Day ceremonies generally occurred in public parks or public open space managed by a local authority. The nursery trade supported the IFS by supplying trees for Arbor Day, while the Department of Lands supported local nurseries by purchasing stock from them.

In Ireland, the place of afforestation in the economic development of the country was evident in the statements and policies of IFS, Sinn Féin, the Provisional Government, Department of Lands and TFI while in practice tree planting was on a local scale. The speeches made at Arbor Day events stressed not only the financial gain possible from timber but also the role played by trees in creating an attractive locality for inhabitants and visitors, positive messages about trees and forestry. Such Days could instil an interest in forestry or respect for trees and public parks in schoolchildren and young people. Some speeches addressed allied topics such as local place names, tree planting in Palestine and alluded to the political sentiment of the period. Remarks about the role of trees 'beautification' of an area, their health benefits and their place in community development are early indications in civil society of the current discipline of urban forestry. While some Arbor Day events in Ireland were low key, the 1959 National Arbor Day event in Ballyfermot, Dublin (Anon, 1959 and 1959a) would have rivalled the large-scale planting event in Hahndorf, Adelaide (Jones, 2010), in its pageantry, though not numbers planted. In Ireland, the scale of planting varied from a single to several to many trees. Although some woodland planting took place, as at Tallow, Co. Waterford in 1919, none could be considered afforestation.

The involvement of schools and schoolchildren in Arbor Day is evident in each period of Arbor Day, a parallel with Arbor Days in other countries. In the period 1935-1939, classes prepared pupils for Arbor Day. One school linked Arbor Day with the subject of agricultural science while a rural school and organisation provided pupils with trees to create shelterbelts at their homes. Arbor Day began in the US and in Ireland as a single day event. Over time it has grown into a programme of year-round events organised by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Tree Council of Ireland, respectively, which overlap with present day 'Green Schools' initiatives.

Though Arbor Days or Arbor months are short-term events, the consequences of tree planting are long term. N. H. Egleston, an advocate of Arbor Day in the US, commented that 'its great value ... is not so much in the number of trees planted on Arbor Day as in the tree sentiment created and stimulated' (Klinek, 2010). In the UK, Arbor Day developed 'love of nature among children' and was less a solution for deforestation (Hipperson, 2012). In an Irish context, an appreciation of trees was fostered by the participation of local schoolchildren and community groups in most Arbor Days. The lasting impact on young people and the place of Arbor Days in developing and fostering local communities warrants investigation.

This paper has examined Arbor Day as recorded in the local and national press. Further examination of documents of Government departments, Local Authorities and records of Dail debates could provide further information on its underlying motivations. In the United States, while Arbor Day emerged at a time of utilisation of forests for timber, implicit in the events was the message that citizens were responsible for 'wise conservation practices'. The inclusion of schools in the Day did not occur until 1883, at the earliest. (Anderson, 2000). In Australia, schoolchildren were involved from the earliest Arbor Days while in Ireland, children had some involvement in the events organised under the auspices of the IFS and Tfl, and they were the principal participants in the Arbor Days organised by the Department of Lands.

A refocus on the function of Arbor Day from afforestation to environmental issues was evident in England in the period 1880-1914 (Hipperson, 2012). Uniquely, the Department of Lands took a long view of afforestation and identified the involvement of schools in Arbor Days as a means of promoting the Government's 1935 afforestation programme. In Ireland, in each period surveyed, afforestation was the focus, though levels were low. In 1908, 1.5% of the island of Ireland, and in 1928, 1.27%, and late 1980s, 6.6% of the Republic of Ireland respectively were afforested (derived from Forest Service 2008). A civic responsibility for trees which underpinned development in Letchworth (Hipperson, 2012) was also evident in the activities of local residents' associations, e.g., Waterford (Anon, 1972). Hipperson (2012) identified the important role played by trees in the production of a green environment for those who settled in a new garden city. In Dublin, Arbor Day tree planting occurred in schools, parks and streets of developing suburbs. These events were early examples of the current common practice of community groups working in association with state and local authorities to improve their public space. Support from well-known people such as Ebenezer Howard was evident at Letchworth (Miller, 1989). In Ireland, Arbor Days provided local and national politicians with an opportunity to meet their electorate.

Though the benefits of a green environment, such as ornament, shelter and health were mentioned at speeches in Dublin (1918c), Castlebar (1919c) and O'Rahilly (1951), not until the late 20th century were they examined scientifically. The legacy of Arbor Days and planting programmes in Dublin has provided scientists with material to examine benefits of trees, e.g., carbon sequestration (Ningal *et al.*, 2010) and the contribution of green infrastructure to the urban environment (Mills *et al.*, 2015). Initially the

economic value of tree planting was emphasised; later, the educational value of tree planting to young people was noted, themes connected to present environmental values of conservation, preservation and sustainability. As tree roots spread far beyond a tree's canopy, the ramifications of Arbor Days also spread nationally and internationally.

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