

Yeats Set Free to Wander

Over 200 anthologies of poetry by WB Yeats were distributed by the National Library of Ireland in various public places in Dublin (Monday, July 9th, 2007).

The books, which may have been left on a train, bus, café, counter, pub, hotel or park bench throughout the city, are distinctively labelled with an invitation to savour the work of the great poet and a request to leave the book in another public place for someone else to enjoy.

The idea, entitled **Yeats Book Crossing**, was inspired by the concept of Book Crossing in other countries. It is hoped that the books, which have been specially purchased by the Library for this book crossing initiative, will be enjoyed by people of all ages, will promote a greater engagement with the poetry of WB Yeats and will lead to further visits to the Library's award winning exhibition *Yeats: the life and works of William Butler Yeats*.

Each of the 250 books is marked with a unique code. Readers can log their discovery and comments on the National Library's website at **www.nli.ie/yeats**

This log will in turn become a record of the journey of each of the 250 books as they wander through public spaces in Ireland and abroad.

Book Crossing is an American phenomenon that began in April 2001 and has taken off throughout the world. Almost a half a million books have been 'released' and there are more than 146,000 members of Book Crossing worldwide. People are fascinated with the fate, karma or the chain of events that occur between two or more lives and one piece of literature.

The founder of book crossing considers it as 'the karma of literature' designed to 'make the whole world a library'.

The continuing relevance and appeal of Yeats today to all kinds of people can be seen in the latest episode of the Sopranos in which Yeats' poem *The Second Coming* is read by Tony Soprano's son Anthony Junior in a moment of self reflection.

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