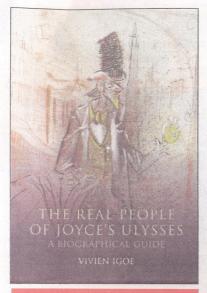
## Vivien Igoe's The Real People of Joyce's Ulysses

rearly one hundred years after its appearance. James Joyce's Ulysses still fascinates, intrigues, thrills and challenges the average reader. To help the neophyte, the Joyce industry has developed a whole range of critical, factual, informative guides to the novel's linguistic, structural and compositional innovations and experiments, such as the use of the stream of consciousness and the profusion of styles. However, there remains a core of hard facts, historical, political and biographical, which can still bewilder the most dedicated of readers. The immense cast of characters which perambulate the streets of Dublin on that memorable day, 16 June 1904, can present a problem, especially for the non-Irish reader whose knowledge of the historical and social background of Ulysses may be skin-deep and who only wants sufficient information to place the characters in their real life

Vivien Igoe's monumental book, The Real People of Joyce's Ulysses, A Biographical Guide. published by UCD Press, more than provides the essential biographical information for all the real characters which populate Joyce's novel. Like a Russian epic novel, Ulysses swarms with names, places, institutions, historical facts and topographical details; enough, in fact, to support the quip once made that if Dublin were to be obliterated, you could reconstruct it from a reading of Ulysses. Vivien's book

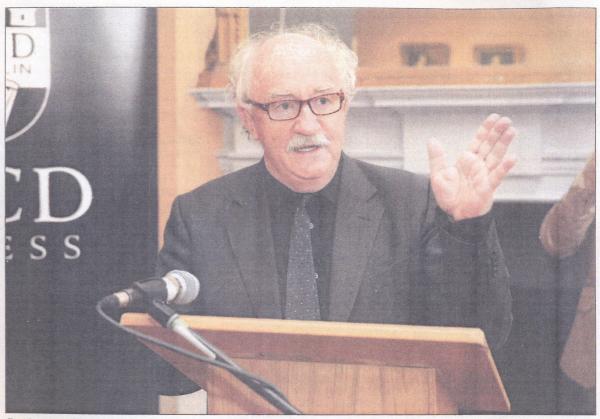


## BOOKreview by Charles M Durante

performs a similar task with the human element of the novel: her biographical entries would enable a future ethnologist to weave a rich tapestry of the human beings who inhabited Dublin (and, in fact, to some extent Gibraltar) in the early twentieth century.

Vivien's book provides the reader who is floundering amid the welter of names with indispensable help: arranged in a dictionary format, a veritable A to Z, her guide collates all the real characters who appear in the novel, including those who only receive a passing mention, like old Luigi from Catalan Bay, Gibraltar.

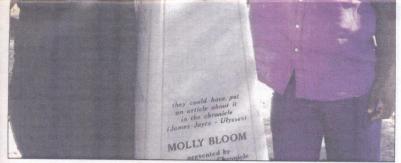
Before examining some of the entries in Vivien's book and how some have a very local bearing. I have to declare an



Professor Declan Kiberd, from University of Notre Dame, who launched the book at the Joyce Centre in Dublin.

interest. Vivien wrote to the Gibraltar Chronicle some years back asking for help with the characters in Ulysses with a Gibraltar connection. Especially in the last chapter of the novel, Penelope, Gibraltar plays a prominent role in Molly Bloom's reverie. when she recalls her youth spent in Gibraltar, her sexual awakening, her first encounter with love and men. I answered her letter, offering to carry out any research necessary locally. I have repeatedly thanked Vivien for providing me with





The Molly Bloom statue at the Alameda Gardens id frequently visited. When authors Joanne Harris and Ben Okri were in Gibraltar a few years for the Literary Festival they were keen on visiting the statue which was created by former Chronicle Editor the late Jon Searle for the 200th anniversary of the newspaper.

the opportunity to explore aspects of Gibraltar and the life of some of its inhabitants which were unfamiliar to me. The rummaging in local archives, interviewing descendants of the characters mentioned in Ulysses, and tracing family connections, gave my interest in Joyce a wonderful boost and convinced me of the importance of the Gibraltar dimension of Joyce's art.

The real joy of Vivien's book is not just the rich biographical content of the entries, indispensable as these have now become for all Joyce aficionados, but the interplay and counterpoint set up between the entries and the roles played by the characters in the novel. Wyndham Lewis claimed in Time and Western Man that

Joyce's art was fundamentally autobiographical and that he invented very little. However, the human reality of Dublin (and Gibraltar) had to be filtered through his artistic sensibility before finding an adequate expression within the fictional world he creates. An analysis of a few entries will highlight how Joyce used the historical and biographical reality of his fellow Dubliners and others to construct the vast panorama of life which is Ulysses.

It is a sobering realisation to recall in the entry on Haines (who appears under his own name in the Telemachus chapter in Ulysses) how he shot himself when temporarily insane when he was only twenty eight years old.

The obsession with firearms

of Ulysses. Vir reconstruct it to be obliterat once made the in fact, to sup topographical y 'suomminsur swarms with 1 a Russian epic populate Joyc all the real ch. piographical i than provides bublished by Ulysses, A Bic book, The Res Vivien 18'08's 1

contexts. the characters sufficient info skin-deep and packground o of the historic reader whose especially for 1904, can pres memorable da the streets of characters wi readers. The bewilder the biographical, facts, historic there remains profusion of s of consciousr sney as the us innovations a structural and guides to the of critical, fac has developed пеорћуће, тће average reade thrills and ch still fascinate James after if early c

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Vivien Igoe signs a copy of the book for Sister Joan Hutchinson during the launch at the Joyce Centre in Dublin.

is already a worry when Stephen complains to Mulligan that Haines spent the night 'moaning to himself about shooting a black panther'. A scholarly, annotated edition of Ulysses will always help the reader with brief biographical sketches of the main characters, but they cannot compete with the full, detailed accounts which Vivien's book provides. Telling observations cast a revelatory light on the quirks of Joyce's characters. For example, in the entry on Oliver St John Gogarty, the original of Buck Mulligan, we learn that he had an 'incisive wit', a trait which is amply corroborated in the novel in Mulligan's bawdy humour and corrosive comments.

In the Circe chapter, we enter Bella Cohen's brothel with Stephen and Bloom. Vivien's

and Samuel, are described as grocers with their shop in Engineer Lane, selling high quality products like Twinning Teas and Jacob biscuits. Another family with entrepreneurial brothers were the Abrines, John and Luis Richard, bakers, whose original name was Abri. They ran the Aix Bakery in 292 Main Street. Interestingly, the name Aix was chosen for the family firm because they won a bread competition held in Aix in France. The Aix building is still standing and now houses a thriving bistro. A Mrs Opisso, dressmaker, also receives an entry and includes Molly's remark she would have drowned herself had she had. such a name!

The local entries provide an apercu into the social history of the Gibraltar of the time.

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entry on Bena sneas a rarra glow on Dublin's red light district with its 1,600 prostitutes and its basic organization on hierarchical lines to cater for the sexual needs of all its clients, drawn from the different socio-economic classes. The establishment described in Ulysses must be a 'flash-house', the better-maintained brothel, as it boasts a pianola which Stephen plays.

The entry on Almidano
Artifoni reveals that he was a
language teacher in Trieste.
In Ulysses he is transformed
into Stephen's music teacher,
the motive simply being the
euphonious sound of the name,
with four syllables each, and
the accent falling on the third
syllable in both names. The
exchange between teacher and
pupil in The Wandering Rocks
chapter takes place in Italian,
supposedly the most musical of
languages.

The 'giants' of Irish culture, politics, literature, and history are found cheek by jowl with undistinguished publicans, businessmen and artisans.

Among the august are Oscar Wilde, G B Shaw, J M Synge, Charles Stewart Parnell (the uncrowned king of Ireland), Jonathan Swift, Douglas Hyde, W B Yeats, George Russell (AE) and John O'Leary. Most of those who played a significant role in Ireland's turbulent history are also here.

Local readers will riffle through the pages of Vivien's book looking for local names. They will not be disappointed. The Benady brothers, Mesod

But, unaoupteary, the most fascinating entry here is that under the exotic name of Lunita Laredo. Molly, the heroine of Joyce's novel, is of mixed ethnic background, a fairly common occurrence in a place like Gibraltar. She is the daughter of an occupying military man, 'Major' Tweedy and the shadowy 'jewess-looking' Lunita Laredo. Incredibly, a Lunita Laredo lies buried in the Jewish Cemetery at North Front and her biographical details will fascinate many a local historian. Lastly. Vivien has left no local stone unturned: she has consulted the Gibraltar Chronicle and lists our local newspaper among the impressive number of newspapers examined. Vivien has gathered a truly stunning range of documentary evidence concerning the real characters in Ulysses: archives, libraries, census findings, heritage and genealogical centres have all yielded their treasures and informed the rich, illuminating entries.

As a former curator of the Joyce Museum, she met and spoke to friends of Joyce like Frank Budgen and Ottocaro Weiss. The Real People in Joyce's Ulysses can proudly stand beside such scholarly works as Richard Ellmann's now classic biography, Stuart Gilbert's groundbreaking James Joyce's Ulysses, a study and Hugh Kenner's Dublin's Joyce. It will undoubtedly become an indispensable 'vade mecum' for all Joyceans.