

Linen Hall wins award for CD-ROM collection of images

Library chronicles our troubled past

AN exhibition documenting Ulster's torrid and bloody political history since the 1960s has won a national award.

Belfast's Linen Hall Library has been honoured for its collection: Troubled Images - Posters and Images of the Northern Ireland Conflict, which collated nearly 3,500 dramatic and powerful images onto CD-ROM.

The 17th Christopher Ewart Memorial Prize - founded to promote peace and reconciliation in Britain and Ireland - was presented to Linen Hall librarians John Gray and Yvonne Murphy at a reception in the Irish Em-

By **STEPHEN DEMPSTER**

stephen.dempster@newsletter.co.uk

bassy in London.

Judges made the award for the CD-ROM collection, but also noted it was just one part of a larger project which included a book and large-scale travelling exhibition, all of which were first unveiled in October 2001.

The items in the collection were all drawn from the library's extraordinary private collection.

Posters, photographs, newspaper front pages, including some from the

News Letter, and other images were included - depicting major political events that shaped the Province from the beginning of the Troubles.

The historic, emotional and often frightening images were supported by individual notes and 50 essays on important events and themes by leading experts in the political field.

Famous faces, including the Rev Ian Paisley, Gerry Adams, David Trimble, John Hume, Bill Clinton and Bobby Sands featured, alongside posters supporting unionist and republican causes and

peace movements.

The exhibition has been shown in Dublin, London and Paris and is now setting sail for America.

Along the way, it has drawn praise from all the political leaders in Ulster, secretaries of state, Irish prime ministers, academics and journalists.

On behalf of the judges of the Christopher Ewart-Biggs Memorial Prize, Professor of Irish History at Oxford University, Roy Foster said: "This year, we short-listed a more varied range of material than ever - history, sociology, drama and current affairs. But, in a sense, the Linen Hall Li-



FRONT PAGE: among historic documents

brary's project sums up all these genres and more.

"The images may not necessarily be cheering but they carry a high-voltage charge, focusing the mind, and forcing us to make connections."

He added the CD-ROM had taken the images to a worldwide audience and there could be no more worthy recipient of a prize promoting peace through understanding.

Librarian John Gray said: "Too often the first casualty of war has been the truth."