

Sir Terry's trip back to Ireland and the bank.

BROADCASTING LEGEND AND former bank clerk Sir Terry Wogan is to recall his time working for the Royal Bank of Ireland in a new television documentary series.

Two one-hour programmes, called *Wogan's Ireland*, will trace the presenter's early life in Limerick and Dublin as part of a portrait of modern-day Ireland.

In one sequence, Terry revisits his old Royal Bank haunts with his colleague of the time, Leo Lacy. Royal Bank was one of three banks that merged to form AIB in 1966.

Wogan told *The Teller* the BBC series is "based loosely on my autobiography" and he hopes it will "make it more clear to the British public what the Irish are about. We're looking at the differences and the similarities between the Irish and the British as well as showing the beauty of the country. It's an interesting time to come to Ireland to say the least."

The broadcaster, who worked in Royal Bank's Cornmarket and Phibsborough branches, left the bank to join Radio Eireann in 1961. It was the start of an illustrious career which has included being part of the founding line-up of BBC Radio 1, primetime BBC television chat and quiz shows and the *Wake Up to Wogan* breakfast show on BBC Radio 2 which had a regular audience of eight million listeners.

Terry said the documentary series includes visits to Cobh, Belfast and Jonesborough. "We've been everywhere, man," he joked. "We've walked the walls of Derry in the rain. To Baltimore, Valentia Island, the Boyne Valley, Hill of Tara and Slane."

Leo went on to become senior management consultant with AIB's International Consultants and is now retired and living in London. He said: "We started filming up in Phibsborough where our branch used to be. We then took the Number 10 bus down to Foster Place which is something we used to do, believe or not, carrying considerable amounts of cash 50 or so years ago."

"When we finally arrived at Foster Place, I spotted that the door was open and was delighted to see that Trinity/UCD, who now occupy the building, had not removed the beautiful mahogany counter and Terry was pleased to move the filming inside. If time had allowed we might even have managed to go up to the board room where we were both interviewed for our jobs."

In his autobiography *Is it Me?*, Wogan recalls his time in the Royal Bank's training branch in Annesley Bridge meeting every day "smartly at ten" to learn "the mysteries of the long book, the wrapping up and sealing of used banknotes, the adding up of long columns of figures, and most difficult of all, the counting of notes with our left hand. And it had to be the left hand, according to our teacher, a man with a pair of eyes like two boiled eggs."

Leo also remembers those days. "Another critical skill we had to master was using a pin to fix the note wrapper – Pinner Whitton was the expert teaching us."



Sir Terry at Foster Place. His documentary series *Wogan's Ireland* is expected to be screened on BBC television in the New Year.