

ANNUAL REPORT
of
THE AISLING SOCIETY OF SYDNEY
1957

The 1956 Annual Meeting of the Aisling Society was held at the Lyceum Club, King Street, Sydney, on Friday, 16th November, 1956, about sixty members being present. Officers were elected for 1957. Mr. Brian J. McGrath retired as President and Mr. James A. Meagher was unanimously elected.

EXECUTIVE for 1957 :

PRESIDENT	-	Mr. James A. Meagher
VICE-PRESIDENTS	-	Mr. Brian J. McGrath Rev. Fr. N.M. McNally His Hon. Judge G.J. O'Sullivan
LIBRARIAN	-	Mr. Denis Kevans
PUBLICITY OFFICER	-	Mr. G.B. Thomas
COUNCIL	-	Miss Isobel Bradley Miss Kay Ward Miss Eithne Bridgland Mr. Alex Mitchell Mr. Richard P. Furniss Mr. William Baggott
HON. TREASURER	-	Miss Ena Sullivan
HON. SECRETARY	-	Miss Mary M. Hegarty.

On this occasion also Mr. Richard P. Furniss read a carefully prepared and interesting paper on "Thirty Years of Irish National Development".

The 1956 Christmas Party was a pleasant function, ending in an impromptu concert enjoyed by all. Over 100 members and friends were present in the Ulster Room at the recently opened Irish National Association Centre. Our first function of 1957 was also a festive one, a buffet dinner and musicale on St. Patrick's Day, held at the "Alexis", Kingsford, where over 80 members and friends enjoyed a very happy evening. The President, Mr. James A. Meagher toasted "The Day We Celebrate".

The programme for the year included the following functions and addresses. Rev. Fr. N.M. McNally and Miss Isobel Bradley arranged in May an evening of music, step-dancing, and films. His Excellency Mordecai Nurock, Minister for Israel, gave an amusing talk in June, "An Irish Jew at a Protestant University". In August the President, Mr. James A. Meagher, addressed the Society in a learned and lively talk "In Search of Early Ireland".

Miss Sheila Hayes for our September Meeting showed a selection of beautiful colour shots taken by her last year in Ireland. Her comments on them, and songs by Mrs. Pat Longstaff and Miss Mary Gibbs were received with pleasure by a large audience. In October Professor J.J. Auchmuty of the

Newcastle University College gave us a diverting but thought-provoking talk about Sir Thomas Wyse and his part in early 19th Century Irish affairs.

Thirteen ladies representing the Aisling Society were invited by the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. H. Jensen, to her civic reception for Miss Sybil Connolly on 12th August, 1957. Miss Connolly expressed pleasure in meeting our members, and regret that the number of appointments made for her would not allow her to meet the rest of our Society.

With sorrow we record the deaths during the past year of three foundation members of the Aisling Society. Miss Lalla Coogan was a lover of Irish books, with an enviable collection. The Hon. W.J. Bradley, Q.C., M.L.C. was a distinguished figure in the legal and political life of Sydney. Mr. James McGirr was a great Labour leader whose generous and kindly personality made him friends in all camps.

Council meetings were regularly held during the year, but we did not have any meetings of literary or other groups. Perhaps some members will interest themselves in such groups in 1958.

Twelve new members joined the Aisling Society in 1957 and are welcomed. Others have left us, including Mr. Richard P. Furniss for Mount Isa, Miss Nora McDonald (Now Mrs. H. Wilkinson) for London, and Miss Mary O'Connor (now Mrs. Reg. O'Brien). *Mr and Mrs A.W. Warneke are in Dublin*

It is a matter of regret to this Society that the appointment of an Irish Ambassador to Australia has not been proceeded with. During the year representations were made to both the Australian and Irish Governments on behalf of the Society. We welcome Mr. W.B. Butler, who has arrived as Charge d'affaires in place of Mr. M.L. Skentlebery, and look forward to seeing him in Sydney.

Suggestions from members as to suitable functions for 1958 will be gratefully received by the Council, who offer to members their best wishes for a happy Christmas and holiday season.

On behalf of the Council,

MARY M. HEGARTY,

Hon. Secretary.

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HON. TREASURER'S STATEMENT

December 1956 to November 1957

<u>RECEIPTS</u>				<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	£.	S.	D		£.	S.	D
Credit Balance	86	18	2	Rent of Halls & Rooms	30	5	0
Membership Subs.	159	12	0	Printing	34	18	6
Sale of Papers)				Postage & Stationery	18	18	9
Irish Envoys)				Supper Costs	11	9	4
Irish Music)	5	2	6	Donations)			
				I.N.A. Sports)	5	5	0
				Irish Festival)	10	10	0
				Sundries	2	7	10
				Bank Charges	1	13	9
				Credit Balance -			
				Bank of N.S.W.	136	4	6
<u>TOTAL</u>	£	251	12 8	<u>TOTAL</u>	£	251	12 8